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THE NORMATIVE ELEMENT IN NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONS*

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In the vast literature on the neighborhood analysis is, as a rule, confined to the levels of behavior (interaction) and attitudes, while the *normative* aspect of the relationship, i.e., the presence or absence of a sense of *obligation*, is usually overlooked. These studies are informative but do not reach an understanding of the specific characteristics of neighborhood as a *social* relationship. For, human relations are *social* relationships in the strict sense if and insofar as they contain a normative element, a sense of mutual obligation.

Mere physical interaction—e.g., an accidental collision of two human bodies—does not constitute social interaction, as Max Weber has pointed out, although it may become the occasion for the development of a social relationship. Furthermore, emotions, sentiments and attitudes oriented toward another person do not *per se* constitute a *social* relationship. Their quality may vary and change without necessarily affecting the social relationship under consideration. Husband and wife may express love and hate for each other in the course of a day, but their marital relationship persists as long as they recognize those mutual obligations which this relationship involves.

The differentiation between the psychic aspects and the social aspects of human relations is especially obvious in the case of legal relationships, but it is also important in cases where a social relationship is based on custom only. We shall call a social "norm" any rule of conduct, prohibitive, permissive or mandatory; social norms assign rights and duties to persons. It will be noted that I do not, as many do, consider the term "norm" to denote a pattern of actual or expected behavior. These patterns may be the result of an awareness of certain rules on the part of the acting persons, as in the case of boys playing a game, but patterns are not rules.

This paper intends to analyze the normative character of the neighborhood relationship and its relation to the

non-normative aspects. It will also indicate *changes* in the normative element which may help to explain why this aspect has been so widely ignored.

The term "neighbor" has various meanings. In urban society today it simply means somebody who lives near the reference person, (Mr. Smith is my neighbor, he lives next door to me. Mr. Jones, also a neighbor, lives around the corner, or "down the street"), but in rural communities, at least in those which are well integrated socially, it means a person to whom the reference person is socially related by specific rights and duties established by custom and, in part, by law—because of the proximity of the dwellings.

The word "neighborhood," correspondingly, may denote an *area* within a local community (which may or may not have definite boundaries and a name) or it may mean a specific type of *social relationships*, which make up a real social institution.

The sociological problem is, to what extent do the two aspects of neighborhood coincide in concrete situations, that is to say, to what extent and under what circumstances do persons inhabiting an area called a "neighborhood" interact socially in the specific ways expected of "neighbors" in the institutional sense?

We shall therefore first inquire as to what social conduct is expected of neighbors in this second sense.

NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Max Weber states that "neighborhood" is originally a social relationship of mutual aid in various emergencies and crisis-situations.[1] In European agricultural communities this is still the meaning of "neighborhood," especially in the less urbanized areas. A farmer in a European cluster village expects his neighbors right and left and across the street to come to his aid when the resources of his own household are insufficient to cope with extraordinary situ-

[1] Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1922, pp. 197-199.

ations. When a child is to be born, the women of the neighborhood will assist in the preparations (though today a doctor or a midwife is likely to perform the delivery) and will help to relieve the housewife of her daily duties; when a death has occurred some neighbor will furnish the wagon for the coffin, others will serve as pall-bearers, still others will ring the church bells, and the wives and daughters will help to prepare the after-funeral meal, and so forth.

It is understood that no immediate compensation will be offered for such services, but certainly the receiver will give the same kind of neighborly aid to any of his neighbors when the need arises. There are, of course, many other occasions for mutual aid, at harvest time or in case of sickness of men or animals and in case of fire or flood.[2] The rigidity of aid expectations seems to vary largely with the urgency of the matter.

The neighbors are also entitled to share the joyous events in the life of a family: where a child is baptized, or married, the neighbors must be invited, and in villages where neighborhood customs are strictly observed, the neighbors will on these occasions have precedence over personal friends of the host. For, the neighborhood relationship is not merely a relationship between individuals but a relationship between households, or more precisely, between homesteads.[3] A German farmer once told me that curiously enough one of his neighbors was a farmer living about a mile outside the village on an "isolated" farmstead. When I asked how long the farm had been there, my informant recalled that about 120 years ago in the course of a re-allocation of land in the village community this farmstead, which had been adjoining his own, had been shifted to its present location. The inference is obvious: the neighborhood relationship had been continued in spite of the spatial separation of the two houses. In this case the neighborhood relationship rested upon the two houses as if it were a mortgage. That rural people think in this way became clear also in the half-joking complaint of a village school teacher, occupant of a former farm house, that he and his wife had to invite their neighbors at many occasions where they would rather invite their personal friends.

Wherever I asked village people in Germany about these matters, I found them well aware of all the implications of neighborhood relations. One of my informants showed me a typed sheet on which he had written what he knew about neighborhood relations in his village "so that the young people might not forget the customs." In the community of Moide in the Lueneburger Heide one of the farms had been acquired by a business man from the nearby city of Hamburg and was now managed by a superintendent who had a very high labor turnover. When I asked one of the other farmers whether this condition had any effect on neighborhood relations he said: "You bet it has. For example, do you think we like it if in case of a funeral they send a stranger over here, a man who may even wear a red tie?"[4]

The sociologically important aspects of rural neighborhood relations in Europe are thus that *they are relationships between occupants of certain adjoining farmsteads,* often dating back several generations; that they are not voluntary but obligatory; that they adhere to the farm rather than to its changing occupants; and that they involve mutual aid in needs as well as mutual sharing of pleasant events. The neighborhood relationship is thus reciprocal on two levels: emergency aid and sociability.

How strong these obligations are felt by the villagers themselves may be illustrated by the following case which I observed in the village of Medelby close to the Danish border during the first years of the Hitler regime. With the exception of one family (who had moved there from Denmark), the entire village was organized in the NSDAP and its affiliated organizations. The Danish family had openly demonstrated their opposition to the regime and the villagers had, for a while, boycotted them. But the village farmers' leader—a functionary of the party—who told me this, added with an apologetic smile: "to-morrow is my wife's birthday and we are going to have a big party; we invited those people too, for after all they are our neighbors."[5] This case showed also that the concept of neighbor is sometimes extended in space: not only immediately adjacent households but also some more distant ones may be considered as neighbors. But the typical social neighbor is the immediate one in the physical sense.

The rural neighborhood relationship functions also—or at least it did in Germany as I knew it—where families of unequal social status are involved: the owner of a full-sized farm would lend his team to the cottager and the latter would reciprocate by helping his wealthier neighbor when he needed additional labor. As Max Weber points out, any work done by the small farmers and cottagers for the larger farmer was in many regions of Germany re-

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[2] Willi Latten, "Die Halligen," *Koelner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie,* VIII, 4, gives an excellent description of neighborhood relations on the small island off the west coast of Schleswig-Holstein. Here in times of flood or when ice in the shallow waters isolates the islands, mutual aid is absolutely indispensible.

[3] I have pointed this out first in: *Die Heidedörfer Moide und Suroide,* Schriften des Geographischen Instituts der Universität Kiel, Band V, Heft 2, Kiel, 1938, p. 55: "From these neighborly relations is to be distinguished the neighborhood as an institution which is attached to the farmsteads rather than to the persons who occupy them ... The rule 'neighbor goes before friend' [naber geiht vör fründ (plattdeutsch)] expresses the character of neighborhood as contrasted with personal relationships ..." (my translation)

[4] Instead of a black one as custom prescribes.

[5] Significantly, another Nazi farmer who had moved but recently to this community from a distant region of the country commented that, "these people here" were not really true Nazis because, for example, they would associate with "that Danish family."

garded as a kind of neighborly help. Even the owner of an estate was in some areas included in these mutual aid relationships.

In the United States where rural communities had to be created out of nothing—at least during the period of rapid westward advance of the "frontier"—such rigidly institutionalized neighborhood relations could not develop everywhere, but the fundamental principle of mutual aid among neighbors was generally accepted and adapted to frontier conditions (e.g., log-rolling, barn-raising, etc.).

There is ample evidence in the accounts of "neighboring" practices in American rural communities that farmers in well-integrated communities regard the services they perform for neighbors as exempt from ordinary business principles. This was brought home to a well-meaning outsider who had persuaded a community of East Frisian farmers in Illinois to keep records of work performed for their neighbors. When the balances were to be settled, the group, upon the suggestion of an old farmer, decided to tear up the checks "because we are not in business with each other, we are neighbors."[6]

It seems, however, that the neighborhood as a social relationship among farmers in this country has lost some of the definite and obligatory character it had in Europe. This is at least the conclusion which I draw from the numerous sociological studies of rural neighborhoods. Almost invariably the neighborhood is defined as an "area," i.e., as a subdivision, sometimes with a name of its own, of the larger "community," comprising more families than the European farmer's neighborhood.[7] These groups are considered to be "active" neighborhoods if the families engage in visiting, borrowing (lending), and other mutual aid and if they maintain a school, a church, and other "institutions." In Europe, the maintenance of these institutions is the function of the local community (*Gemeinde*) or of the state. The local community has definite administrative boundaries.

[6] The story is told in: E. T. Hiller, Faye E. Corner, and Wendell L. East, *Rural Community Types*, University of Illinois, Urbana, 1930, p. 30. See also my review of "Rural Community Studies" in *Rural Sociology*, 7 (June, 1942), pp. 212-216.

[7] N. L. Sims, in his *Elements of Rural Sociology*, 1928, p. 563, relates that in certain field studies the question arose whether spatial groupings of only half a dozen families should be called (sic!) neighborhoods. Charles P. Loomis and J. Allen Beegle in their *Rural Social Systems*, New York: Prentice Hall, 1959, treat the neighborhood definitely as an area. They point out that it is "very unrealistic" to expect that all families in a neighborhood area will exchange work or borrow from each other. Groups which do this also engage in "visiting;" these groups our authors call "cliques or friendship groups." Some cliques consist of neighbors-in-space (nigh dwellers); these cliques correspond to the kind of group which constitutes a neighborhood in the European sense. When Loomis shows (p. 165) that in a German village which he studied cliques were formed very largely among people of the same class and among adherents of the same political party, this merely reveals that the village of Rietze was not a purely agricultural place and not a well integrated community.

In view of this difference in the allocation of social functions, it is easy to understand why the term neighborhood among European farmers has a more specific and restricted meaning. The very fact that American rural sociologists are able to distinguish "active" from "inactive" neighborhoods[8] shows that in the U. S. the social relationships among neighbors are no longer considered obligatory to the degree that is the case in Europe. It also seems to me quite significant that in many American rural neighborhood studies, "visiting" is regarded as the most important among the "neighboring" activities, just as or even more important than mutual aid.[9]

All this suggests that the meaning of the term neighborhood has undergone a change in this country precisely because the functions of the neighborhood as a social group have changed.

A recent theoretical paper states clearly that economic prosperity resulting in "a relatively high degree of economic security . . . has brought changes in social organizations in locality groups. On the one hand, less need is felt for mutual-aid agreements (sic) or other types of dependence on neighbors."[10] On the other hand, the American farmer depends more on special purpose organizations, on public institutions and on private enterprise.

When formerly at a funeral the neighbors would perform the necessary functions they now "set up a flower fund to send flowers in case of death in the community."[11] Mutual-aid is still provided, but it seems no longer self-understood, or else it would not be regarded as a meritorious feature of "community organization" by agricultural extension sociologists.[12]

The general impression gained from the more critical studies made in the United States in recent years[13] is that

[8] J. H. Kolb and D. G. Marshall, "Neighborhood-Community Relations in Rural Society," *University of Wisconsin AES Research Bulletin* 154, 1944. Cf. Lowry Nelson, *Rural Sociology*, New York: American Book Co., 1952, pp. 84-87.

[9] Selz Mayo, in his "Testing Criteria of Rural Locality Groups," *Rural Sociology*, 14 (December, 1949), pp. 317-325, uses certain "behavior characteristics" in rating locality groups, e.g., visiting, mutual aid in emergencies or in work, spontaneous play and recreation (hunting, fishing), and "exchange of personal confidences" etc. No mention is made of a sense of obligation or of the normative element in neighborhood relations. Alvin Boskoff, in his "The Ecological Approach," *Rural Sociology*, 14 (December, 1949), p. 309, likewise neglects the normative character of neighborhood relations.

[10] Alvin L. Bertrand, "Rural Locality Groups: Changing Patterns, Change Factors, and Implications," *Rural Sociology*, 19 (June, 1954), p. 176. See also my discussion of Bryce Ryan, "The Neighborhood as a Unit of Action in Rural Programs," *Rural Sociology*, 9 (March, 1944), pp. 35-36.

[11] From: Inez Lovelace, Eugene Gambill, and Milburn E. Jones, *Projects of Organized Rural Communities*, Agricultural Extension Service, University of Tennessee, No. 332. p. 7.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] For example, Walter L. Slocum and Herman M. Case, "Are Neighborhoods Meaningful Social Groups Throughout Rural America?" *Rural Sociology*, 18 (March, 1953), pp. 52-59.

rural neighborhood relations have become less obligatory, more a matter of choice and individual preference, which means that they have become more like neighborhood relationships in the modern city.

IN TOWNS AND CITIES

In the larger cities of Europe as well as in North America, the neighborhood has assumed a very different meaning, as we shall presently see. But first, let us consider briefly the nature and role of neighborhood relations in medieval or rather in pre-industrial towns and cities. The middle ages were the age of cooperative organizations mostly constructed on the pattern of brotherhoods. This pattern seems to have been adopted also by small local groups more or less formally organized to take care of certain common interests of people living in vicinity of each other. Some historians suggest that these neighborhood groups were one of the starting points of the revival of municipal government. Thus it seems that in the city of Florence groups of this kind, which originally were formed for the upkeep of streets, bridges, fountains, and for the repair of the parish church, sometimes established joined committees for purposes of common interest. The members of these committees, *boni homines* (good men) later assumed the more glamorous title of *consuls*—an indication that they were regarding themselves as successors to the ancient Roman institution of city government.[14] Institutionalized neighborhood groups were a common feature of medieval cities in Germany and persisted well into the nineteenth century. In some small cities and towns they have survived to the present day. The reason for their existence was the need for cooperation among spatial neighbors in the maintenance of a well or fountain as well as in firefighting (which of course presupposed care of a water supply). We have the description of one of these associations that existed in the town of Burg on the isle of Fehmarn in North Germany in the beginning of the nineteenth century. "The heads of households sharing the property of a well (*die Sod-Herren*) assembled during the carnival season to consider repairs, to collect the fees for well-use from outsiders and to approve the accounts, whereupon they engaged in three days of drinking and feasting."[15]

Similar neighborhood associations were still functioning in small towns in the Rhein-Gau a hundred years ago when W. H. Riehl described them in his "Wanderbuch" as follows:[16]

"The origin of the neighborhoods (Nachbarschaften) or well-associations (Brunnengenossenschaften) lies certainly far back in the middle ages, although it seems that older written statutes than those of the year 1607 have not yet been found. The neighbors on certain streets or in certain quarters (of the town) associate (verbünden sich) themselves for the maintenance and clean keeping of a common well, elect annually a "well-master," keep a "well-record" (Bornbuch); they bind themselves not only to stand by each other in matters concerning the well, but also to celebrate common festivals and to aid one another in any kind of emergency and danger, especially in burying their dead and in consoling each other in sorrow. Lastly, it is an old custom for the whole neighborhood to help a neighbor carrying his cross and to drink with him a measure of wine for consolation. A neighbor must not even depart without giving advance notice to the neighborhood, indicating the reason for traveling, and asking for leave, by penalty of ½ quart of wine. (Penalties are always assessed in wine). The hardest penalty is imposed for quarrelling and fighting in meetings: the disturber of peace has to pay the drinks for the entire neighborhood for that day, "as in the old days." These corporations had also their banners and drums, even "guns and cannon" are mentioned, "which belong in common to the neighborhood": though it is likely that these were used only to fire *salut* (Freudenschüsse).

Of particular interest is the well-book which contains by no means merely a record of well-cleaning but should give account of "all memorable events" that occurred during the year. Thus we find in those excerpts which Schunk[17] has published, that these well-books were virtual chronicles which, like the statutes themselves, tell us of the urbane culture (Bildung) of those country-towns-people. At present these neighborhoods are said to be best preserved in the town of Lorch; they occur however even farther down the river and the "well-book" still exists as "neighbor-book." Along with their ancient traditional functions these groups serve now also as a "caucus" for state and municipal elections, etc. . . . "

The last remarks indicate a change in functions which is not at all unusual in institutions of this kind.

A more recent account of neighborhood associations, also in the Rhine Valley, is given by W. Latten in an article on small towns on the lower Rhine.[18] Besides the old well-fraternities, Latten found still another kind of neighborhood (street) associations without any specific practical purpose. The statutes of well-association which Latten reproduces, reveal various secondary functions of mutual aid and conviviality.

The well-associations in the town of Jever (Ostfriesland), like similar organizations in other towns and cities of North Germany, have evidently developed from the an-

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[14] F. Schevill, *History of Florence*, London: G. Bell and Sons, 1937. Institutionalized neighborhood groups were a common feature of medieval cities in Germany and persisted well into the nineteenth century. In some small cities and towns they have survived to the present day (pp. 26f.).

[15] George Hanssen, *Historisch—statistische Darstellung der Insel Fehmarn*, Altona, 1832, pp. 318-319.

[16] W. H. Diehl, *Wanderbuch. Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes*, 4 Band, 2 ed., Stuttgart, 1869, pp. 207-209. The Rhein-Gau is the area between Weinheim and Lorch. (Translation by R. Heberle.)

[17] Riehl refers to Schunk, *Beitraege zur Mainzer Geschichte*, date unknown.

[18] Willi Latten, "Die Niederrheinische Kleinstadt," *Koelner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie*, 1930, p. 316.

cient rural neighborhood; the rural neighborhood was, as we pointed out before, more than a well-company. It has a variety of functions. But the urban well-company, while primarily a one-purpose specialized group, also had secondary, especially sociable ("*gesellige*"), functions and it is characteristic that participation in the annual banquet was and still is a major obligation of the members.[19]

It is evident from these studies that the urban institutionalized neighborhood group has a larger membership than the original rural neighborhood; the urban neighborhood tends to extend further than the immediate neighbors "next door and across the street." In the case of well-associations named neighborhoods this larger membership and wider spatial extension is easy to understand.

On the other hand, as soon as the functions of maintaining a water supply and providing fire protection are taken over by the municipal government, the neighborhood tends to shrink again and relationships between neighbors tend to become less obligatory, although they by no means become unimportant.

In large cities of today there is less *need* for mutual aid and cooperation among neighbors since most functions of the old village and town neighborhoods are taken over by public utilities and private enterprises—funeral "parlors," etc. Where formal organizations of residents of a neighborhood area exist ("organized streets," etc.),[20] they are in most cases, though not always, associations for the protection of real estate values. While they sometimes arrange picnics and engage in other forms of sociability, they rarely perform the same kind of essential services which the older street and fountain companies used to give. Certain socalled "Neighborhood Councils" or committees which have been formed in Chicago and a few other large cities, comprising areas with a population of 100,000 or more, are only nominally neighborhood organizations.[21] Furthermore, the *mobility* of population in many urban areas impedes the development of strong social ties even among immediate neighbors. There are, of course, even in the largest cities, neighbors who know one another and who help each other, and who share leisure-time activities. But these "neighboring" activities, numerous and diverse as they may be, are entirely voluntary. No city dweller acknowledges an imperative obligation to associate with his neighbors and he will not associate with them unless he likes them or finds them useful. It is therefore, in urban society, often impossible to distinguish between personal friendship and neighborhood relations. It is quite significant that in urban society the very meaning of the term neighborhood changes; no longer does it denote a specific kind of social relationship existing by the force of custom between near-by households; instead it denotes a vaguely defined area which may comprise a city block or two, or even an entire "subdivision" or city district. Louis Wirth was probably the first sociologist to point this out.[22] Thus, if the city dweller speaks of somebody as his neighbor, he means that the person referred to happens to live near him,[23] perhaps within walking distance, but he does not recognize any specific social obligations in relation to this person. There are not any specific neighborhood relations attached to a city-house or dwelling as they are to a farmstead in a tradition-bound village community.

Consequently, we find that actual neighborhood relationships may vary greatly within a given urban community between individuals and also between ecological areas:

First, we find cases of social isolation because persons either are avoided by their neighbors or on their own part avoid contacts with their neighbors. This is rarely possible in villages and small towns (William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" notwithstanding) but not at all infrequent in large cities.[24]

Second, we find that where need for mutual aid is greatest neighborhood relations are most similar to those in rural communities. Intensity of social interaction between neighbors tends to decrease as one moves from working class areas to upper-income bracket residential suburbs.[25] In the tenements of working class people borrowing, exchange of services, and assistance in sickness are a necessity, and gossiping and visiting, at least among housewives, are typically frequent. The children and young people of a tenement or of adjoining houses or of a section of the street will meet and play together, thus inducing relations among the parents—which are by no means always free of conflict. However, even in working class areas one associates only with certain neighbors whom one chooses; and if a neighbor moves, his successor in the flat or house need not enter into the same kind of relationship with the neighbors and he may not even be accepted by them. The better off people are financially, the less dependent they are on their neighbors and the more choosy they will be in estab-

[19] Hans Siuts, *Püttnachbarn und Püttbier, Das Jeversche Püttwesen und seine Stellung in der deutschen Volkskunde*, Jever, 1957, contains a wealth of information on neighborhood groups in other parts of Germany.

[20] See for example, Stuart A. Queen and D. F. Carpenter, *The American City*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954, pp. 159-166.

[21] See Wilbur C. Hallenbeck, *American Urban Communities*, New York: Harper and Bros., 1951, pp. 580 f.

[22] Louis Wirth, "A Bibliography of the Urban Community," in R. E. Park, E. W. Burgess, and R. D. McKenzie, *The City*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925, p. 190.

[23] Stuart Queen therefore proposes to use the term "nigh-dweller" rather than neighbor.

[24] See the novel *My Brother's Keeper* by George Melville Baker which is based on a real case of two brothers who lived as recluses in New York City.

[25] G. Kirch, "Die Nachbarschaft in der Vorstadt," *Koelner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie* VIII, 1, 1929, p. 74; René König, *Die Gemeinde*, Hamburg, Rowohlt, 1958, p. 59.

lishing more than superficial contacts with neighbors. If some studies made in the United States seem to contradict these statements, it should be remembered that we are referring to mutual aid as the main function of neighborhood relations, rather than with "casual neighboring" or visiting.[26] Among poor people in the South, neighborly mutual aid is sometimes given even between white and Negro families who would never "visit" with one another. This presupposes of course that whites and Negroes live on the same street or in the same block, a fact which is not unusual in cities like Baton Rouge or New Orleans.

Third, children and their mothers are more important as partners in neighborhood relations in the city than are men. This observation of G. Kirch is confirmed by many studies made in this country. The population of suburban areas in U. S. cities often has a very narrow age-range. In a neighborhood composed mainly of married couples with young children, the latter will form informal play groups and induce acquaintances among their mothers. The mothers will take turns to look after the children, to take them to the movies, etc. As the children grow up, they will establish more intimate contacts outside the neighborhood and social relations among the families may then begin to decline.

Fourth, within a given area or vicinity, proximity of dwellings is often less decisive for the establishment of neighborly relations than occupation and social status. While in the tradition-bound farmer village the members of the family next door *are* one's neighbors in the social sense, whether one likes them or not, and regardless of status, the city dweller can pass by those next door and select people of more equal social status (and congenial personalities) as neighbors in the social sense.[27]

There are, of course, bound to be exceptions to these rules. Thus at the extreme urban fringe, where even people of wealth are occasionally dependent upon their next-door neighbors, the pattern of neighborhood relations may resemble more that of a rural community. Or, a suburb or subdivision may contain cliques of people who have moved

there because they wanted to live near certain of their friends and acquaintances. In that case, interaction among neighbors may be very lively in spite of a relatively high socio-economic level.

The sociological insight that among city people the so-called "secondary" or, as I would rather say, utilitarian and contractual relationships tend to be more frequent than "primary" relationships seems to have led some sociologists to believe that the latter kind do not occur at all among urban people. In any case, a study has been made in Lansing, Michigan, in order to dispel this erroneous belief.[28] This study is an excellent case of a fight against sociological windmills. One wonders what the three authors did expect when one reads: "Therefore the data may be interpreted as showing that intimate social relationships are to be found in urban areas and that these relationships may be found both inside and outside the local area of residence."[29]

An interesting result of the study, however, is that people in "high" economic areas seemed to have higher rates of intimacy with their neighbors than residents of "low" economic areas, because this is contrary to expectations.

The authors of the study explain this finding partly by the fact that in the city of Lansing the upper-class residential alternatives are rather limited, and partly by the greater intra-city mobility of the lower-income groups. The first factor would have been modified, I believe, if the town of East Lansing had been included, because that is a major upper-stratum area comprising a fairly mobile element of university personnel. Furthermore, the questionnaire contains at least one question[30] which working class people are likely to answer in the negative because they, or at least their wives, will rarely "spend a whole afternoon or evening" visiting with some neighbor. This is more a middle-class and upper-class custom.

THE NORMATIVE ELEMENT VS. THE SENTIMENTAL

Urban sociologists have been especially inclined to proceed from the fallacious assumption that the neighborhood relationship should, in the ideal case, demand emotional

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[26] See for example, Judith T. Shuval, "Class and Ethnic Correlates of Casual Neighboring," *American Sociological Review*, 21 (August, 1956), pp. 453-458, and the literature referred to in that paper.

[27] The selective character of neighborhood relations in cities is confirmed by a recent comparative study of suburban housing development (*Siedlungen*) in Germany. According to this study, the very definition of neighborhood is quite "subjective," that is, it depends very largely on the individual as to whom he will consider a neighbor. Furthermore, there is "no recognition of duties, rights and roles (among neighbors) sanctioned by consensus or binding tradition." See Helmut Klages, *Der Nachbarschaftsgedanke und die nachbarliche Wirklichkeit in der Grosstadt*. Forschungsberichte des Wirtschafts-und Verkehrsministeriums Nordrhein-Westfahlen Nr. 566, Sozialforschungsstelle an der Universität Münster zu Dortmund, Abt. Prof. Dr. G. Ipsen. Westdeutscher Verlag, Köln u. Opladen, 1958, pp. 120 ff.

[28] Joel Smith, William H. Form, and Gregory P. Stone, "Local Intimacy in a Middle-Sized City," *American Journal of Sociology*, 60 (November, 1954), pp. 276 ff.

[29] *Ibid*. 278. This discovery is really the main conclusion of the elaborate study. "Thus, urban social integration is contributed to (sic!) by the fact that urbanites derive social satisfaction from informal relationships both within and outside of their local areas of residence. Spatial mobility makes for city-wide ties, stability makes for local area ties, and most urban residents have both. See pp. 283-284.

[30] In this study, as in many recent empirical studies in sociology, the statistics do not refer to actually observed facts but to people's statements about their social actions and attitudes. It is quite possible that the poorer people actually "visit" more often than they admit because they want to give the impression of being too busy.

involvement of the partner, that neighbors should be "friends." However, Willi Latten in the island study mentioned above (footnote 2) points out that "a personal, sentimental bond does not seem to exist at all between the inhabitants of a '*Warft*'" (i.e., between spatially very close neighbors). Later he says: "Obvious to the observer was the contrast between spatial proximity and psychic distance, which could be observed with almost all the Hallig people. The compulsion of the regulated living together becomes tolerable only on the condition that the individual does not have to be personally devoted to every neighbor with whom he stands in objective relations."[31] One could perhaps rephrase this observation by making a distinction between emotional and categoric relationships. Neighborhood, as a social relationship, is originally indifferent in regard to emotional-affectual attitudes of neighbors to one another. Neighbors will do certain things for each other, whether they like each other or not.[32] To use Max Weber's terms: inter-action in neighborhood relations is typically tradition-oriented, not emotional-affectual.

The reciprocal obligation between neighbors is a consequence of their proximity and their interdependence. Where interdependence ceases because of the availability of services as in the city, proximity no longer constitutes the basis for a categoric social relationship. Neighbors may now choose to what extent they want to associate with each other. Friendship of a more or less intimate nature may thus develop between some neighbors. On the other hand, there are, even in cities, many situations in which neighbors in space will engage in mutual aid without becoming personal friends; one may lend each other garden tools or exchange plants and yet not invite one another for parties. To illustrate the first possibility, I can remember from my suburban childhood in Germany that my parents would make formal calls on our immediate neighbors

[31] Latten, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

[32] Werner Bar, "Das Winzerdorf an der Ahr als Siedlungsgebilde," *Koelner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie*, XII, 1933, pp. 118f., observes that even those neighborhood customs which might indicate a more sentimental attitude, as for example those connected with weddings, baptisms, or funerals, are mainly determined by tradition. "One acts not because of a psychic urge but because the forefathers used to do it this way." Likewise borrowing-and-lending is done under exclusion of any sympathetic motivations. "Lending (*Bitleihe*) is a completely traditional custom, which obviously no longer has any sentimental foundation." A recently published study by Elizabeth Pfeil of neighborhood relations in working class and white collar districts of a German city shows that these people had a fairly precise idea of what kind of conduct was expected of inhabitants of the same tenement or apartment house; also, they did not want to become too intimate with neighbors, making a clear distinction between them and their personal friends. (Elisabeth Pfeil, "Nachbarkreis und Verkehrskreis in der Grosstadt," in: R. Mackensen a.o. *Daseinsformen der Grosstadt*, Tübingen, J. C. Mohr, 1959, pp. 158-225. This study, which I had seen in manuscript, was published after completion of my article.) See also René König, *op. cit.*, p. 64, about the general tendency to keep distance from one's neighbors and to differentiate between neighborliness and friendship.

(right, left and across the steeet) and even invite them to formal parties, but we would never dream of borrowing anything from any one of them, not even from the one family with whom my parents were really quite intimate socially. At present I am living in a "middle-class" suburban area where every-day relations between neighbors are restricted to the exchange of little favors but do not involve visiting in our homes or invitations to parties. However, I have reasons to assume that in emergencies the women would come to each others aid (as some have done in certain cases of sickness) ; in this sense we seem to represent a case of what Ruth Glass has called "latent social neighborhood integration."

There is a tendency in contemporary sociology to focus attention too exclusively on attitudes and to neglect the normative element in social relationships. By overlooking the latter in the study of neighborhoods we run the risk of not adequately understanding the structure of this relationship. Neighborhood in the social sense is originally a reciprocal relationship of mutual aid. As such it is regulated by ancient custom which determines quite rigorously who the neighbors are, and what neighbors may expect of each other. The relationships assume the characteristics of a social institution. That neighbors should harbor particularly sympathetic sentiments toward each other is by no means implied. Where the institution is well preserved, neighbors will act as expected even if they do *not* particularly *like* each other. Only where the institution of neighborhood has been weakened because of a decline in the need for mutual aid, do personal sentiments and attitudes of neighbors towards one another tend to determine the amount and quality of "neighboring" interaction.

HOSTILITY AND CONFLICT

This is not to say that neighborhood relations do not involve psychological problems. On the contrary, there seem to exist specific patterns of hostility which arise from the peculiar physical and social qualities of relations between neighbors.

Spatial proximity gives occasion to many conflicts. Among peasants there is the notorious squabble over boundary lines, especially where, like in most parts of Europe, the holdings of each farmstead are scattered in small lots all over the village land. In cities, especially where multiple family dwellings are located close together, e.g., in tenement and apartment-house districts, the occasions for conflict are numerous: the noises of radio and other gadgets, the nuisances caused by dogs, cats and other pets, the disturbing games of children, and so forth. In slums and blighted areas the sharing of water-faucets and toilets by several households is a frequent cause of friction.

It seems a sound hypothesis to say that the greater the physical proximity, the more numerous the chances of conflict—other things being equal.

One of the great advantages of the characteristic American patterns of rural as well as urban settlement—the single farmstead and the urban one-family house with garden—appears to be that they minimize these occasions for conflict.

It also seems warranted by experience to maintain that conflicts between neighbors tend to be particularly bitter and long-lasting. In rural areas it is not at all unusual that they go on from one generation to the other; proximity not only makes it impossible for the alienated parties to avoid one another but, on the contrary, gives occasion to new conflict-generating contacts. Besides, it seems a general rule that animosities which arise out of violations of primary group norms tend to become particularly bitter.[33]

Thus we are, as so frequently in the study of social relationships, confronted with a paradox: the relationship which on the one hand involves cooperation and mutual aid is at the same time, by its very nature, a seat of potential friction and hostility. It is the awareness of this ambivalence which keeps the wise peasant and the experienced city dweller from becoming too involved emotionally with his neighbors and induces him to preserve "social distance" in spite of nearness in space.

THE LAW AND NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONS

The kind of conflicts which typically arise between neighbors are reflected in the vast body of law concerning the rights and duties of neighbors in relation to one another. This body of law has grown largely from custom through court decisions and is therefore to a large extent of local or regional nature.

Curiously enough, these legal aspects are almost completely ignored by sociologists as if custom (folkways and mores) alone could regulate the relations between neighbors. Even in a relatively static society this would be impossible; the very fact that immediate neighbors own or occupy adjoining pieces of land makes it necessary to protect property rights against interferences from neighbors and to impose restrictions on property rights in favor of neighbors. In a changing society and under conditions of a rapidly changing technology there arise constantly new problems, new types of conflict, which can be solved or alleviated only by legislative law or local ordinances.

The confusing variety of neighborhood law prevents us from dealing here with its substance in detail. We can only give examples of the kind of legal questions that arise out

of neighborhood-relations and point out some of the general problems of neighborhood law.

In rural areas of Europe, where one farmer may own many very small fields that are sandwiched in between other farmers' fields, the right to walk or even drive over the neighbor's land is often indispensable for effective cultivation. Or, in an urban community one may have to go on the neighbor's lot in order to trim a hedge or to do some repair work on one's house. Does the neighbor have to tolerate such trespassing? The keeping of cattle, pigs, chickens and other animals may be prohibited on city lots; incorporation of fringe areas may lead to a change in the legal situation in these and other respects. There are specific restrictions in cities on such uses of property which result in molestation of one's neighbor by noise, smell, fumes or by interference with his radio, phonograph or TV equipment. While a great deal of neighborhood law has developed out of custom, many of the problems arising from rapid urbanization or from technological innovations have to be met by enactment of statutory legal rules.

The beginnings of legislation on neighborhood relations seems to coincide with the rise of the modern state. The enlightened absolutism of eighteenth century monarchs has been responsible for a great many enactments in this field. In some cases legislation was deemed necessary where tradition was no longer strong enough to maintain what had so far been useful institutions. The *Brünnenordnung* of Jever of 1756, regulating the functions of well-associations, may have been issued for this reason.[34]

Sociologically it is very significant that modern neighbor-law, as a rule, deals almost exclusively with property and does not concern itself with mutual aid. Neighborhood-law is essentially a body of legal norms by which compromises are reached between the conflicting interests of owners of adjoining pieces of real estate.[35] Like the mutual obligations in the original rural neighborhood, these restrictions of property rights often assume the form of servitudes resting upon certain fields or town lots rather than pertaining to the proprietor as a person.

CONCLUSION

We started from the observation that the word neighborhood may mean either an area or a social relationship. Neighborhoods in the first sense may be small in area as well as in the number of people comprised or they may be quite large in both respects, as is often the case in cities.

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[33] Simmel refers to this phenomenon repeatedly. See *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, translated and edited by Kurt H. Wolff, Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1950.

[34] H. Siuts, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 13.

[35] Meisner-Stern-Hodes, *Nachbarrecht*, 2nd. edition, Berlin, 1955, p. 2. The Norwegian Law, however, recognizes neighborly mutual aid (*dugnad*) as "a strong legal obligation" according to Edv. Bull, *Vergleichende Studien über die Kulturverhaeltnisse des Bauerntums*, Oslo, 1930, p. 19.

Neighborhood in the second sense means originally a small number of people *whose dwellings are adjoining* and who by the nature of things are dependent on each other for mutual aid in emergencies. Custom prescribes what kind of aid may be expected and assigns definite roles to the occupants of the various dwelling places involved. But mutual aid obligations are not the only content of the relationship; neighbors are also entitled to share certain joyous or festive events in each other's lives. In this sense, neighborhood is an institution. The institutional character of neighborhood is not abolished but rather re-enforced when the group is extended beyond the immediately adjoining households, as is the case particularly in pre-industrial cities. As the need for mutual aid declines in the modern city and also in modern rural communities, the functions of the neighborhood tend to become less important; the sociability aspects tend to predominate. At the same time, as a consequence of this change, association with one's neighbors becomes essentially a matter of choice.

The latter development has led sociologists to focus on attitudes and behavior and to neglect the normative element in neighborhood relations, and to ignore completely the legal aspects.

The question whether the term "neighborhood" should be used to designate an area or a type of social relationship is not merely a semantic problem. We do not advocate change in terminology. What matters is the distinction between a social order in which occupants of an area, that is "neighbors in space," are related to each other in a specific way by mutual rights and duties attaching to their dwelling places (and where they act accordingly) and another type of social order in which it is a matter of choice whether and in what ways one associates and interacts with one's spatial neighbors. There are, of course, empirically many transitions from one type to the other and it is especially interesting to observe that the normative element never quite disappears, that even in the city a minimum of neighborhood custom survives along with legal regulations.

LOWER CLASS FAMILY ORGANIZATION ON THE CARIBBEAN COAST OF COLOMBIA*

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Two empirical observations made at the outset of an extended study of the family on the Caribbean Coast of Colombia provided the starting point for the analysis to be reported here: first, there exist in the Cartagena area, side by side and in the same social class, different organizational and structural types of families; second, the proportion of the family types varies from class to class.[1]

Why do different types of families coexist? Why is there a differential class distribution of these types? Although the above two questions constitute the problem of this paper, we cannot expect to find complete answers to them in this study, especially to the second one, since our inquiry is confined to the lower class.[2] We hope, however, that our findings will throw substantial light on both of them and, at least, constitute the first step toward complete answers.[3]

Since this is the first systematic study of the family on the coast of Colombia, we did not intend it to be comparative in nature. We would, nevertheless, like to place it in the sphere of studies of the Negro family in the Western Hemisphere. The common historical conditions of European expansion, conquest, colonization, and slavery define the area from Brazil to the United States as its broad comparative context.

In classifying and analyzing the data, we thought at first that the typologies of Simey and Henriques, used in the analysis of the West Indian family, were suited to the Cartagena area.[4] Upon closer scrutiny we found them to be lacking in clarity and modified them to the following simple typology.[5]

The lower class families in the Cartagena area fall into two broad categories: 1) those with a conjugal basis, and 2) those with a consanguineous basis. The conjugal units in turn can be divided into two types: A) those with a religious and juridical sanction which we shall refer to as the "Catholic Family," and B) those without a religious and juridical sanction which we shall call the "Consensual Family."

Employing this typology, we consider it important to analyze each type in terms of its 1) frequency in relation to other types, 2) probability of continuity and stability, and 3) direction of change into another type.

THE CATHOLIC FAMILY

In the lower class, consensual union as well as Catholic marriage is regarded as wedlock. Both are referred to as *matrimonio* and the couple as *esposos* (spouses). The only distinction made between the two is that the latter are described as living *unidos por la iglesia* (united by the church), while the former as *comprometidos* (bound to another).

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* Expanded version of paper read at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Society, April, 1958.

[1] By the Cartagena area we mean that part of the Caribbean coast constituting the Departamento de Bolivar, one of Colombia's sixteen states, of which Cartagena is the capital. The city was founded in 1533 by Pedro Heredia. Spain spent large sums of money to make it the center for its New World domination and for commerce with Central America, Peru and the Philippine Islands. Thus it became one of the chief ports through which Negro slaves were brought to Spanish America. Some of them were kept in this area and used on plantations and in city households until 1851 when slavery was abolished in Colombia.

[2] The lower class in the Cartagena area is easily distinguishable from the other classes, no matter which of the following is used as an indicator: income, style of life, status, power, or color. But it will be simple, yet most important, for our discussion to keep two things in mind when talking about the lower class: it is extremely poor and predominantly Negro. While the first characteristic makes it representative of Colombia in general, the latter differentiates it from the interior of Colombia whose lower class is largely Mestizo.

[3] The data on which this study is based were collected during a three year stay in Cartagena from 1953 to 1956. The first year was limited to participant observation which was facilitated by the author's ability to speak Spanish and her position as director of the George Washington School in Cartagena. The author grew up in a semi-feudal country and has been a member of various social classes at different periods—all of which facilitated the establishing of rapport and the development of helpful relationships for the purpose of gaining the necessary data.

[4] T. S. Simey, *Welfare and Planning in the West Indies*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946, p. 82; Fernando Henriques, "West Indian Family Organization," *American Journal of Sociology*, 55 (November, 1949), pp. 30-37.

[5] In addition to the two bases of classification which we use in our simple typology, they employ a third, time duration of the family unit. Thus, they come up with two types of conjugal families without a religious and legal bond: 1) "Faithful Concubinage"—a permanent unit, and 2) Henriques' "Keeper Family" and Simey's "Companionate Family"—a transitory unit. Unfortunately these two types of conjugal families are not mutually exclusive. The latter can be designated as such only after it has ceased to exist, and yet it is supposed to be a typology of existing families. Furthermore, both Simey and Henriques apply the time basis for classification only to the non-legal unit and disregard it when considering the legal unit. This leads to the erroneous conclusion that the "Christian Family" is a stable and continuous unit.

The Catholic Family is a conjugal unit with religious and legal sanctions. (Legal and church marriages are inseparable in Colombia and one cannot take place without the other.) The exact distribution of this type of family is difficult to ascertain because Colombian statistics do not make such a differentiation and fail to break down the number of marriages in terms of social class. The 1954 figures (the last available), which show that 60 per cent of births in the Cartagena area were illegitimate, point, however, to the infrequency of Catholic marriage in the lower class, especially since illegitimacy is largely a lower class phenomenon.[6]

But quantification is not necessary to prove that the Catholic Family is rare, for even a casual observer can sense the scarcity of this family form among the lower class. This fact has been referred to often and lamented in public statements by government and church officials and in Colombian literature. "Matrimony is an exceptional privilege. The modest classes do not marry . . ." is one of the typical statments in print that we have gathered.[7]

In questioning lower class men and women about the infrequency of church marriages, one often hears the argument that priests charge much and that poor people cannot, therefore, afford a religious wedding. The cost involved, however, is not adequate explanation for the avoidance of Catholic marriage in the lower class. The people who put forth this argument in order to explain their failure to marry in church often spend similar amounts of money on clothes, entertainment, etc.

From the answers given to questions about the infrequency of church marriage and the frequency of family breakups, a definite pattern emerges of men blaming the women and the women blaming the men. "It is always the man who does not want a church wedding" is a typical statement by a woman. "Many women are no good. A man wants to make sure. If he sees she is a good woman, he marries her later," explained a man.

The constant pattern of blame reflects the exaggerated hostility between the sexes which is markedly noticeable in this area. Much of the women's conversation revolves around the theme that *los hombres aqui son malos* (the men here are bad). Another cogent indicator of this hostility is the great preoccupation with *brujeria* (witchcraft practices). Women often comment upon recurrent cases of men employing magic to gain the affection of a woman or to rid themselves of an undesirable spouse. Men, in turn, dread and commonly complain about the women's use of magic to subdue and dominate them. Even those men who claim that they do not believe in the effects of magical po-

tions, insist that women using these manage to control their men by weakening them or damaging their intestines by feeding them this *porqueria* (filth).

Through observation and questioning of informants, we inferred that men here try to avoid a lasting relationship while women strive for it. The inquiry into the circumstances under which witchcraft is resorted to by men and women reinforced this conclusion. (Women resort to magic even more often to keep the men than to win them. But we have never found a case of a man using magic to keep a woman.) The exaggerated hostility between the sexes and the great obsession of men with preserving their *libertad* (liberty), and avoiding *ser dominado* (domination by women), become more understandable when this polarity in men's and women's attitudes is borne in mind.

Curiously, these different attitudes, men avoiding and women striving for lasting relationships, may lead to similar behavior by both. Men reject church and legal marriage, despite the considerable pressure put on them by church and civil authorities, because such marriage implies to them the obligation of caring for the family. They generally feel that they cannot take on such a heavy load. Marriage is referred to as *camino sin exito* (a road without an exit), and men are careful to avoid entering this road.

Although in most instances men resist church and legal marriage, some cases of long lasting consensual union have been observed in which the woman hesitated to take this step. The woman fears that should the man leave her after such marriage has taken place, he will gain legal control over the children. She is also afraid that the man will *descomponerse* (deteriorate), which means that he will act more irresponsibly than before. The unconscious underlying assumption seems to be that man is not capable of taking on the tremendous responsibilities of church and legal marriage, and should he do so, he is likely to break down under the heavy burden.

Having observed that the Catholic Family is rare in the lower class, we may now inquire into the probability of its continuity and stability when it does occur. Although it is usually assumed to be a long lasting unit because it is based on Catholic marriage, it tends to be just the opposite in the lower class. We are convinced that survey data, if available, would bear us out on this point as well as on the following: the age at which Catholic marriage is contracted can be used as an indicator of its chance of continuity. When two young people marry in church, it is not very likely that they will live together for life. On the other hand, marriage between middle aged or old people has more chance of being a lasting relationship.

Why are the chances for continuity of a domestic unit based on Catholic marriage so small among young people? For an answer we must look at the circumstances under

[6] *Anuario General de Estadistica*, Bogota: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadistica, 1954, p. 31.
[7] Alfonso Roman Aquior, *Ayer, Hoy, y Mañana del Liberalismo Colombiano*, Bogota, 1947, p. 221.

which such a marriage takes place. There is a Colombian law which makes sexual relations with a minor punishable by imprisonment. Recourse to this law is often used as a threat to induce a young man who was involved with a virgin to set up house with her, that is to form a consensual relation. As a rule, the family of the girl would prefer a consensual union under such circumstances because they regard it as having more chances for continuity than forced church marriage. As one mother, whose unmarried minor daughter became pregnant, explained it, "I tell you, here you cannot force a man to marry a girl in church because he will leave her soon."

Giving birth under a consensual arrangement is socially acceptable and carries no stigma whatsoever in the lower class. But when the young man refuses to enter such a union, the girl's family is confronted with the problem of sparing her and itself the shame of having a child born out of wedlock. (Here it must be recalled that wedlock in the lower class is either a consensual union or a Catholic marriage.) They may attempt to solve it by obtaining a court order for his imprisonment. In such circumstances the young man can only escape prison by marrying the girl legally, which in Colombia means a religious wedding.

People who have lived in a consensual union for a number of years contract Catholic marriage under quite different conditions. They usually marry to meet the requirements for certain jobs, housing, or schooling for their children. If Catholic marriage were not made a necessary requirement for economic and social improvement, these people would probably not enter it. As a woman who has lived in consensual union with the same man for sixteen years explained, "when you are married in church you can't leave your husband even when he treats you badly. This way you can always leave. No, I didn't want to get married in church but now I will for my children's sake."

Thus, we see that there is a difference in the quality of constraining forces leading to Catholic marriage when marriage is preceded by a consensual union. These are social mobility factors which continue to operate after Catholic marriage has taken place. In contrast, the forces that bring about marriage among young people who have not lived in consensual union are legal requirements which cease to operate once they have been complied with. This may account for the fact that Catholic marriages preceded by consensual unions are more likely to be lasting than those which are not.

When a Catholic Family breaks up, it usually occurs before or shortly after the young woman has given birth to her first child. She then returns to her family, which in most cases is a consanguineous Female-Centered Family, and in some cases a Consensual Family, each of which types will be discussed later in some detail.

The abandoned young mother generally stays with her family for at least forty days after having given birth because of the strongly held belief that any work during this period would be highly damaging to her health. She may either start working after this time, if there is someone in the family to nurse the infant, or wait until she has completed nursing it. If her family lives in a village, she leaves the child with them and emigrates to a city or town to seek employment.[8]

Thus, the burden of the child's support is shouldered by the young mother and her family. Eventually she is apt to become the *querida* (sweetheart) of another man and this in turn may lead to a consensual arrangement. When it does, a new Consensual Family unit evolves. Obviously, it can never become a Catholic Family since the religious and legal bond of the previous marriage cannot be dissolved. Often the child who has stayed with the mother's family will join the mother when she enters into a consensual union.

THE CONSENSUAL FAMILY

This type of family is much more frequent in the lower class than the Catholic type. It must be pointed out, however, that the high rate of "illegitimate" births, 60 per cent of all births, which was used as an indicator of the rareness of the Catholic marriage in the lower class, fails to denote that consensual unions are more common. The reason is that Colombian statistics lump together two kinds of births under the heading of "illegitimate": children born in consensual union, i.e., where parents live together, and children born outside of it. The distinction between these two groups of children is nevertheless important, because only the latter are "illegitimate" in the social sense, while both are "illegitimate" in the legal sense.

It must be added, however, that the "socially illegitimate" constitute a large portion of the total illegitimate births. The pattern of courtship (*noviazgo*) which almost always precedes the consensual union, partially accounts for the high number of births outside both the Catholic and Consensual Families. In the lower class a young man generally does not *comprometerse* (bind himself) to a girl until he makes certain of her virginity by having sexual intercourse. A woman, for example, whose sister became pregnant during courtship told us: "Right after she started

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[8] It is important to note that no distinction is made in this article between the urban and rural family which would necessarily have to be done in studying the more industrialized parts of Colombia. The Cartagena area, with its 428,429 inhabitants, however, has not yet made its first steps toward industrialization. Among the lower class population of Cartagena, the family organization in the urban parts does not differ substantially from that of rural localities. There is a great deal of turnover in population between Cartagena and the surrounding villages. As a matter of fact, most of the people in the urban lower class were either born in a village, have family ties with the village, or both.

going with him I talked to him about his intentions. He told me that he could not *comprometerse* without having her first." Here it must be emphasized that while the man is not expected to marry the girl whom he has deprived of virginity, he is required by the social norm to enter into a consensual relationship with her. However, the man frequently fails to live up to this norm. Many of the "socially illegitimate" births are the result of broken promises, of failure to enter the promised consensual union. "What happens in our class," according to one young woman, "is that a man promises everything before he has the girl. When he gets what he desires, he does not want to get tied down."

Another factor which accounts for the numerous "socially illegitimate" births is the pattern of extra-consensual relations. The social norms make it wrong for a lower class man to be simultaneously part of more than one conjugal unit, because he cannot afford to support more than one family. But they do not prohibit him from having *queridas* (sweethearts) on the side. As a matter of fact, it is customary for men to spend occasional nights with their *queridas*. Men are particularly prone to form such relationships during the spouse's pregnancy. Women complain that their men take a dislike to them while they are pregnant, and men claim that the women during pregnancy are guilty of this very feeling toward them. Whichever the case, it is during this period that the man may spend nights with his *querida* or even reside with her. "My husband could not stand me when I was pregnant with the last child and he went to live for months with his *querida*," informed one woman.

The pattern of extra-marital and extra-consensual relations is buttressed by the belief, shared by men and women, that the *Latino* is very *ardiente* (passionate). Because of that, they explain, he cannot be satisfied to live with only one woman and it is both natural and necessary for him to have more. In so far as the woman strives for stability in the family, she must fight and overcome this very nature of man. She must *componer* (gain control over him) and remake him, and to accomplish this difficult task she often has to resort to magic.

It is this fact of extra-consensual relations which must be kept in mind when considering the Consensual Family in terms of stability and continuity. The salient point is that these relations constitute a real and constant danger to the stability and continuity of the family unit. A woman most often becomes a *querida* in the hope that she will woo the man away from his spouse whom she hopes to replace. It is generally believed that one of the most efficient and natural ways of gaining influence over a man, *componerle*, is to have a child with him. Then there are also many magical formulas that a *querida* may use to win the man away from his spouse.

The exaggerated hostility between the sexes, which we alluded to, is tied to the strains involved in this generally accepted pattern of extra-marital and extra-consensual relations. The extra-consensual relations often result in a breakup of the Consensual Family and the setting up of a new one. They are, therefore, conducive to short-term consensual unions.

When the man abandons his family, his former spouse and the children may continue to live together and thus the family becomes transformed into a consanguineous type of domestic group. This is likely to occur when the family owns the house it lives in. The tremendous importance that women in this area attach to possessing a house, even if it is only a shabby hovel, becomes understandable when one realizes that it is often an indispensable condition for not dissolving the domestic group when the man abandons it. When the domestic group does not have the house and other resources to continue to function as a unit, the abandoned woman and children, or the children alone, join her family.

Where the extra-consensual relations do not lead to a breakup of the old consensual unit and the formation of a new one, the children born to the *queridas* are their sole responsibility. If the mother cannot care for the child, she leaves him with her family. Occasionally the spouse may allow her man to bring home the children he has had with *queridas*.

FEMALE CENTERED FAMILY

In the discussion of the conjugal types of families, one based on Catholic and legal marriage and the other on consensual union, it was necessary to bring in the third type, the consanguineous, in order to examine what happened to the woman and her children when the conjugal family broke down. Doing field work in the Cartagena area, one cannot help but note the great frequency of the consanguineous domestic groupings which, we think, outnumber even the existing consensual units.

We shall call this type of family a Female-Centered Family because at its head is a woman, with the rest of its members somehow related to her: her siblings, her children, or grandchildren. New units of this type, as was pointed out earlier, often come into existence when the man abandons his spouse and leaves the house to her. On the other hand, a new consanguineous domestic group may originate much later. After the man deserts her, the woman who has no house of her own may leave the children with her family and send money for their upkeep. When they become older, their common earnings may make it possible for the mother to set up house, thus forming a new unit.

Once established, this type of family has greater chances for permanence in the lower class than either the consensual or Catholic type. Even in cases where the woman who is the head of the family takes a *marido* (husband), his

future departure does not affect the continuity of the domestic group. It has been observed that in some such groups husbands succeed one another but the core of the family remains the same. When the children reach adulthood and begin leaving home, grandchildren start coming in. Thus, many domestic groups consist of the woman, her younger children, and her grandchildren.

The relative stability and continuity of the Female-Centered Family, about the origin of which the investigators of the Negro family in the New World are divided, must be kept in mind when dealing with the question of persistence of this type. The Afro-Americanists approach this family type as a "deviant, disorganized" form and trace it to the process of reinterpretation of the African "matriarchal" family type by New World Negroes.[9] Their opponents attribute this "disorganization" to "historic conditions of slavery" under which stable matings were inhibited. Thus, Frazer holds that the masters' economic interest in the survival of the Negro children caused them to recognize the dependence of the young children upon the mother. "Under such circumstances," he concludes, "a maternal family group took form and the tradition of Negro woman's responsibility for the family took root."[10]

In all such writings the Female-Centered Family is seen as arising from slave conditions and fulfilling important functions for the slave system. A meaningful analysis of family organization today, however, must go beyond this point to an examination of why the Female-Centered Family still persists, exists side by side with the conjugal types, and is the predominant form. Let us, therefore, try our hand at this difficult task.

A FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO THE FAMILY IN THE CARTAGENA AREA

In all cultures that have been studied, the family is identified with the functions of procreation and socialization.[11] The importance of the first requires no explanation, and that of the latter has been neatly expressed by Parsons: "It is because the human personality is not 'born' but must be 'made' through socialization that in the first instance families are necessary."[12]

Let us now look at each type of family—the conjugal family, both of the Catholic and consensual types, and later at the consanguineous family in terms of the above functions of each. When focusing on how the conjugal

domestic group comes into existence and operates, we noted that it is conducive to a high birth rate. We saw, when dealing with the question of stability and continuity of the consensual family, that permanence is not even the norm in the sense of shared expectation. It comes into existence on the very assumption that it is intrinsically impermanent. Stated more simply, once established, the conjugal family is unlikely to continue for long. Because it is transitory it cannot satisfactorily fulfill the functions of care and socialization of offspring. How then are the children of such unions cared for and socialized?

In so far as the conjugal units in the lower class function as breeding mechanisms, but fail to provide care and socialization of offspring, the need exists for an alternative structure to fulfill those functions. The consanguineous Female-Centered domestic group constitutes such a structure, and, as we have noted before, does perform those functions. In addition, the conjugal family operates in a manner conducive to a high rate of "socially illegitimate" births, in the sense of births both outside Catholic marriage and consensual union. It has been shown previously that under the arrangements of *noviazgo* (engagement), and of *queridas*, extra-marital and extra-consensual relations, such births are apt to take place. Again, a care and socializing agent is necessary for these children born out-of-wedlock and out-of-consensual union, and the consanguineous Female-Centered Family meets these requirements.

We know that any one institution may fulfill several needs and that the family is generally such an institution. What we see, however, in the lower class of the Cartagena area are two separate structural arrangements for meeting the distinct functions of procreation, care and socialization. The conjugal types of family can be thought of as predominantly breeding and the consanguineous as predominantly care and socializing mechanisms. (We say predominantly because each type may—and occasionally does—perform the other functions. Thus, some children are born in consanguineous families and some children are cared for and socialized in conjugal families.)

In conclusion, through the examination of the different types of families existing in the Cartagena area, first in terms of frequency, duration and sequence, and later in terms of function, we have arrived at partial answers to the basic questions posed at the beginning of this study. The conjugal and consanguineous families co-exist and are both diffused in the same social class because, broadly speaking, they fulfill different functions: the first, the function of procreation, and the second, the function of care and socialization.

Both conjugal types, the rare Catholic Family and the common Consensual Family, are largely short-term transitory units and, as such, are unsuited to the care and socialization of offspring. But they prove to be suited to procre-

[9] Melville J. Herskovits, *Man and His Works*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948, pp. 553-5.
[10] E. Franklin Frazier, "The Negro Family in America," in Ruth N. Anshen, *The Family, Its Functions and Destiny*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959, p. 69.
[11] Stuart A. Queen and John B. Adams, *The Family in Various Cultures*, New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1952, p. 14.
[12] Talcott Parsons and Robert F. Bales, *Family, Socialization, and Interaction Process*, Glencoe: The Free Press, 1955, p. 14.

ation even as they are conducive to "socially illegitimate" births. Care and socialization of children, both those born within and those born outside of conjugal units, are largely functions of the Female-Centered Family. Thus, by meeting the requirements of care and socialization, which generally cannot be met by the short-lived conjugal types, the Female-Centered Family is perpetuated.

This analysis could be carried further into a consideration of how effectively the consanguineous Female-Centered Family meets the requirements of care and socialization in the lower class of the Cartagena area. Suffice it to say at this point that, being a permanent and stable unit, it fulfills these functions more adequately than the discontinuous conjugal types.

PROPINQUITY AND HOMOGENEITY AS FACTORS IN THE CHOICE OF BEST BUDDIES IN THE AIR FORCE*

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Studies of friendship choices in school and college situations and studies in the general area of mate selection have shown repeatedly the significance of propinquity and homogeneity in the choice of compatible companions.[1] Despite the apparent significance of these two variables in such studies, they have been given little attention as factors in the formation of friendships in the military situation[2]—an area of growing importance in our society.[3]

As a means of providing a further test of the findings of previous studies and extending the investigation of the operation of the two variables to the military situation, one phase of the Air Site Project was devoted to a study of the effects of propinquity and homogeneity on the choice of best buddies in the Air Force.[4] The present paper is a report of that study.[5]

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The general hypothesis to be tested was that there is a positive relation between propinquity and homogeneity (the independent variables) and the choice of a best buddy (the dependent variable). This hypothesis derives from the more general theory that consensus is a significant factor in the formation and persistence of informal social groups.[6] By consensus is meant similarity in attitudes, values and interests.

The reasoning involved is that homogeneity with respect to such personal characteristics as race, age, marital status, education and rank operates to produce similar attitudes, values and interests. For example, individuals with similar educational backgrounds may be expected to value the same things to a greater extent than individuals with dissimilar educational backgrounds. Likewise, individuals who share the same marital status may be expected to have more common attitudes and interests than persons whose marital status is dissimilar.

Furthermore, it is felt that propinquity in the sense of physical nearness is an important prerequisite for the formation of most consensual type groups, since those persons who have face-to-face contacts are more likely to discover or develop common viewpoints than those who do not have such contacts.[7]

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[1] See, e.g., Maurice R. Davie and Ruby Jo Reeves, "Propinquity of Residence Before Marriage," *American Journal of Sociology*, 44 (January, 1939), pp. 510-18; R. J. Abrams, "Residential Propinquity as a Factor in Mate Selection: Fifty Year Trends in Philadelphia," *American Sociological Review*, 8 (June, 1943), pp. 288-94; Alfred C. Clarke, "An Examination of the Operation of Residential Propinquity as a Factor in Mate Selection," *American Sociological Review*, 17 (February, 1952), pp. 17-22; George A. Lundberg, Virginia Beazley Hertzler and Lenore Dickson, "Attraction Patterns in a University," *Sociometry*, 12 (February-August, 1949), pp. 158-69; John H. Burma, "Cliques and Popularity Among Freshman Girls," *Sociology and Social Research*, 34 (September-October, 1949), pp. 21-24; Florence Moreno, "Sociometric Status of Children in a Nursery School Group," *Sociometry*, 5 (November, 1942), pp. 395-412; A. B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth*, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1949; George A. Lundberg and Lenore Dickson, "Selective Association Among Ethnic Groups in a High School Population," *American Sociological Review*, 17 (February, 1952), pp. 23-35; Charles E. Bowerman, "Assortative Mating by Previous Marital Status: Seattle, 1939-1946," *American Sociological Review*, 18 (April, 1953), pp. 170-77.

[2] One study which does touch upon this subject is Leslie D. Zeleny, "Selection of Compatible Flying Partners," *American Journal of Sociology*, 54 (March, 1947), pp. 424-31.

[3] The "American Soldier" studies of World War II pointed out the importance of primary group relations in the Army. (See Edward Shils' discussion of the importance of the military primary group in Edward A. Shils, "Primary Groups in the American Army," in Robert K. Merton and Paul Lazarsfeld, editors, *Continuities in Social Research: Studies in the Scope and Method of the "American Soldier,"* Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1950, pp. 17ff.) Consequently, the study of the formation of friendships in the military situation would seem to be a pressing area of study for the sociologist. Emphasizing even more the timeliness and importance of this subject is the use of the buddy system in the armed forces. If, as the Army proposed in 1953, military best buddies are to work, eat and live together, then more detailed study of the factors entering into the choices of best buddies becomes important from both the theoretical and the practical standpoints. (See "Brave New Army Team," *Time Magazine*, July 13, 1953.)

[4] Air Site Project was a study of the problems of working and living at radar sites of the Air Defense Command, United States Air Force. The study was carried on by the sociology department of the University of Washington under contract to the United States Air Force. Delbert C. Miller was director of the project.

[5] See also, Herman J. Loether, *A Study of Best Buddy Choices on a Small Military Installation*, unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Washington, Seattle, 1953.

[6] See Edward Gross, "Symbiosis and Consensus as Integrative Factors in Small Groups," *American Sociological Review*, 21 (April, 1956), pp. 174-79.

[7] It is true that consensual type groups do sometimes form without the occurrence of propinquity; however, such cases are the exceptions rather than the rule. Occasionally, lonely hearts clubs or personal newspaper advertisements substitute for propinquity.

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If the foregoing line of reasoning is valid, then propinquity and homogeneity should be important variables in the formation of such consensual type groups as best buddy dyads. For the purposes of this study, marital status, race, age, education, and military rank were designated as indices of the homogeneity factor; while work group and place of residence were designated as indices of both homogeneity and propinquity. The specific hypothesis to be tested was that Air Force men stationed on a small, semi-isolated installation would pick as their best buddies on the installation other men like themselves with respect to some or all of the seven sub-variables under investigation.

PROCEDURES

A questionnaire constructed primarily for a study of small group integration, but including questions specifically designed for the study being reported here, was administered to 182 men stationed on a small, semi-isolated Air Force Base in May, 1952.[8] Included in this questionnaire was the question, "Who is your best buddy on this Air Site?" Other questions provided data on age, marital status, race, military rank and education. Data on work group and place of residence were obtained from the personnel office on the base.

The questionnaire was administered to all available men on the base during two separate sessions held in the recreation hall. It was hoped that a complete enumeration of the base population could be achieved, but this hope was not realized. Still, the 182 men who did respond to the questionnaire made up a very sizeable proportion of the population of the site.[9] A check of the questionnaire respondents on the major variables of the study against those who did not fill out questionnaires revealed that the questionnaire respondents did not differ significantly from the non-respondents on any of the variables with the exception of rank.[10] It was found that the proportion of commissioned officers in the sample was significantly smaller than the proportion they represented of the total population of the site. For this reason, it is questionable whether generalization from questionnaire respondents to the total site population is justifiable.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Of the 182 men who filled out questionnaires, 126 named

[8] Edward Gross, Herman J. Loether and L. Wes Wager, *A Study of Small Group Integration*, unpublished interim report presented to the Human Resources Research Institute, United States Air Force, 1952.

[9] Security regulations prevent the writer from revealing what proportion the sample was of the total population of the Air Site. This information is available, however, to those with the proper security clearance and a need for it.

[10] Data on age, marital status, race, education, rank, work group and place of residence of those who did not fill out questionnaires were obtained from the personnel files.

best buddies. Of the 126 best buddy choices, only 36 choices were reciprocated; consequently, there were 18 mutually chosen pairs.

The 70 statistical hypotheses of the study were tested by comparing the observed distributions of best buddy choices on the relevant variables with the distributions of these variables in the air base population as a whole. The null hypotheses stated that the distributions of best buddy choices with respect to age, race, marital status, education, rank, work group and place of residence would not differ significantly from the distributions of these variables in the Air Site population as a whole. Tests of significance were made by means of the chi square and binomial probability techniques.

Age. For purposes of analysis, the age distribution was dichotomized into those under twenty-one years of age and those twenty-one or older.[11] Thirty-two per cent of those on the air base was under twenty-one years of age and 68 per cent was twenty-one or older. Eighty-six of those who made best buddy choices were twenty-one or older. Of these, 25 chose men under twenty-one as their best buddies and 61 chose men who were twenty-one or older. This distribution of choices did not differ significantly from what chance would lead one to expect ($\chi^2 = .34$, 1 d.f., $P > .50$). Of the 39 men under twenty-one making best buddy choices, 15 chose men under twenty-one while 24 chose men twenty-one or older. These choices did not vary significantly from what chance would lead one to expect ($P = .24$). Therefore, the data of this study, at least, do not support the hypothesis that age is an important consideration in the choice of a best buddy.

Race. Two racial categories were considered in relation to best buddy choices: white and non-white.[12] Ninety-three per cent of the total population was white and 7 per cent was non-white. Every one of the 115 whites choosing best buddies made their choices from among their fellow whites. Not one white chose a non-white as his best buddy! This distribution of choices was found to vary significantly from chance ($\chi^2 = 7.56$, 1 d.f., $P < .01$). Of the 10 non-whites who made best buddy choices, 8 chose non-whites and only 2 chose whites. This distribution of choices also deviated from chance to a significant degree ($P < .001$). It was concluded on the basis of these findings that a man's race is a very important consideration in the choice of a best buddy, especially when the person doing the choosing is white.

Education. In analyzing best buddy choices according to educational attainment, two categories were used: non-

[11] The rationale behind this categorization was that twenty-one was the important age as far as participation in informal activities was concerned, since men under twenty-one could not legally drink alcohol.

[12] The non-whites were all Negroes with the exception of one man who was Mongoloid.

high school graduates and high school graduates. Thirty-eight per cent of the men on the base had not graduated from high school, while 62 per cent had high school diplomas (15 per cent of these also had some college education). Of the forty-nine non-high school graduates making best buddy choices, 20 chose non-high school graduates and 29 chose high school graduates. This distribution did not vary significantly from chance (P=.39). Seventy-six high school graduates made best buddy choices. Of these, 16 were of men who were not high school graduates and 60 were of men who were (x^2=8.56, 1 d.f., P<.01). Thus the data of this study seem to indicate that while the better educated men discriminate against the lesser educated men in their choices of best buddies, the lesser educated men do not discriminate against the better educated.

Marital Status. Two categories of marital status were studied in relation to best buddy choices: married men and those who were not married (including single, divorced and widowed). Thirty-five per cent of the men on the base was married and 65 per cent was unmarried. Thirty-seven married men made best buddy choices. Of these, 15 choices were of married men and 22 were of unmarried men. This distribution of choices did not vary significantly from what chance would lead one to expect (P=.29). Of the 88 unmarried men who chose best buddies, 10 chose married men and 78 chose unmarried men. This distribution did differ significantly from chance (x^2=20.59, 1 d.f., P<.01). Thus unmarried men were prone to choose unmarried men rather than married men as their best buddies; but the converse situation was not demonstrated.

Rank. Three categories of military rank were considered in the analysis: enlisted men (75 per cent of the population), non-commissioned officers (17 per cent), and commissioned officers (8 per cent). In-group best buddy choices were compared with out-group best buddy choices for each of these three categories. Ninety-eight enlisted men made best buddy choices. Of these, 92 choices were of other enlisted men and 6 choices were made outside of the enlisted men category (all 6 choices were of non-commissioned officers). This distribution of choices was significantly different from what chance would lead one to expect and showed a definite tendency for enlisted men to choose their best buddies from within their own group (x^2=17.63, 1 d.f., P<.01). Twenty-five non-commissioned officers made best buddy choices. Twelve of these choices were of other non-commissioned officers and 13 were out-group choices (all of the out-group choices were of enlisted men). In-group choices by non-commissioned officers significantly exceeded chance expectation (P=.0003). Only 2 commissioned officers made best buddy choices and both of them named fellow commissioned officers. Their tendency to name members of their own group was statistically significant (P=.006).

Work Group. The next phase of the analysis was concerned with best buddy choices of fellow work group members as compared to choices of outsiders. There were 20 work sections on the base. Enough data were available for 15 of the 20 sections to test the null hypothesis of no relationship between work section and best buddy choice.[13] In 10 of the 15 work sections studied, members chose significantly more of their fellow workers than outsiders as their best buddies. In the other 5 sections no such tendency was apparent. The analysis of best buddy choices by work section is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. BEST BUDDY CHOICES BY WORK SECTION

Section	Per Cent of Total Population	Number of Choices	In-Group Choices	Out-Group Choices	Prob.
Section 1	5	7	3	4	.0038
Section 2	4	3	1	2	.115
Section 3	9	7	5	2	.0001
Section 4	2	3	1	2	.059
Section 8	7	10	9	1	<.001
Section 10	6	6	4	2	<.001
Section 11	4	6	5	1	<.001
Section 12	9	13	13	0	.00
Section 13	24	35	25	10	<.001
Section 14	6	7	4	3	<.001
Section 15	7	9	3	6	.02
Section 16	2	4	0	4	.92
Section 18	1.7	2	0	2	.97
Section 19	1.7	2	0	2	.97
Section 20	4	5	2	3	.015

It is interesting to note that all 13 of the best buddy choices made by the members of work group 12 were of fellow work group members. This very definite preference for fellow work group members as best buddies can probably best be explained in terms of the type of work done by the members of section 12. Section 12 differed from the other work sections on the base in that it was composed of skilled electronics technicians. These men took pride in their technical training, identified strongly as a group, and tended to set themselves apart from non-technicians much in the manner of a colleague group.[14]

Since almost a fourth of the total population of the air base was concentrated in one work section (Section 13), a more detailed analysis of the best buddy choices of the members of this section was made. Section 13 was divided into four work crews. In-crew and out-of-crew best buddy choices were compared for the members of the four work crews in the section. In each of the four crews, crew members chose their best buddies from among their fellow

[13] There were four work sections in which only one best buddy choice was made and one work section in which no choices were made. Thus, the data for these five sections were too meager to subject to statistical analysis.

[14] For a discussion of colleague groups see Edward Gross, *Work and Society*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1958, pp. 222 ff.

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workers significantly more often than chance would lead one to expect. The members of crew 1 made two best buddy choices within the crew and five outside the crew (P=.04). The members of crew 2 made three best buddy choices within the crew and four outside the crew (P=.006). The members of crew 3 chose four of their best buddies from within the crew and five from among outsiders (P=.001). In crew 4, three best buddies were chosen from within the crew and seven from outside the crew (P=.02).

A closer look was taken at the five work sections in which in-group best buddy choices were not significant in order to uncover any possible clues to the reason for the apparent lack of preference for fellow workers in these particular sections. It was discovered that four of the five work groups were small (none had more than five members). This fact led to the speculation that there may be a lower limit in group size below which limit it becomes increasingly unlikely that one will be able to locate a fellow group member enough like oneself to establish a friendship.

Though the fifth work section considered here had more than five members, the members of this section did not work together as a unit, nor did they do similar jobs. Rather, they worked in relative isolation from each other, doing unrelated types of jobs. Hence, the fact that the members of this section did not significantly choose members of their own work group as best buddies might possibly be attributed to the absence of both propinquity and homogeneity as factors in the situation.

Place of Residence. The first step in the analysis of best buddy choices in relation to place of residence was to divide the population into two categories: on-site residents and off-site residents. Seventy-one per cent of the total population was found to live on the site and 29 per cent off the site.

Of the 87 on-site residents making best buddy choices, 79 chose on-site residents and only 8 chose off-site residents. This distribution of choices was statistically significant (P=.001). Twenty-three off-site residents made 14 of their best buddy choices of on-site residents and 9 of off-site residents. This distribution of choices did not deviate significantly from chance (P=.90). It should be noted that the off-site residents were primarily married men; hence, these findings are confounded by the influence of marital status on the choice of best buddies. Granted, some of the men who lived on the site were married; but their wives were not with them, so they enjoyed almost as much freedom as the single men. Availability for recreational activities was probably one of the major considerations in the best buddy choices of unattached men. Since married men living off the site with their families were probably less available than men living on the site, they were discriminated against in the best buddy choices of on-site residents.

The on-site residents lived in five barracks. Each of the barracks had an upper and a lower bay. In each bay of each of the barracks were nine rooms. In most cases these rooms were occupied by two men; however, there were a few rooms occupied by one man and a few others occupied by three.

For purposes of analysis, the upper and lower bays of each of the barracks were considered as separate living groups. The best buddy choices of members of these living groups revealed that in every case members made significantly more of their choices within their own living groups than chance would lead one to expect. The findings are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. BEST BUDDY CHOICES BY BARRACKS RESIDENCE GROUPS

Residence Group	Per Cent of Total Population	In-Group Choices	Out-Group Choices	Probability
Lower Five	8	8	2	.001
Upper Five	7	5	3	.001
Lower Six	6	4	2	.001
Upper Six	6	4	1	.001
Lower Seven	7	3	8	.04
Upper Seven	7	6	3	.001
Lower Eight	8	11	1	.001
Upper Eight	6	4	5	.0012
Lower Nine	8	3	6	.03
Upper Nine	8	4	4	.002

Closer scrutiny of the places of residence of those men who reciprocated best buddy choices leads one to some interesting speculation. As was mentioned earlier there were 18 mutual choice best buddy dyads in the sample.[15] Admittedly, 18 cases are too few to reveal any very definite tendency; nevertheless, the living arrangement of the members of these 18 mutual choice dyads was striking enough to warrant some attention.

The members of 14 of the 18 mutual choice dyads lived in the barracks on the base. One member of each of the remaining four dyads lived in the barracks and the other member lived off the base. In 6 of the 14 mutual choice dyads whose members lived in the barracks, each member lived in a different barrack. In the case of one dyad, the members lived in the same barrack, but in different bays. The members of 5 of the mutual choice dyads lived in the same bay of the same barrack, but not in the same room. In only two of the mutual choice dyads did the members of the dyads share the same room, and in both of these cases they shared the room with a third man. In no case did the members of a mutual choice dyad live alone together in the same room.

The living arrangement of the members of these 18 mutual choice dyads suggests the possibility that there is a point at which the degree of propinquity of the mutual

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[15] *Supra,* p. 19.

choice dyad becomes so extreme that the stability of the group is threatened. It is reasonable to suspect on the basis of past studies that degree of homogenity of characteristics of the members is an important consideration in determining the stability of an informal group. If this is in fact the case, then the frequency and intensity with which group members interact will determine whether or not they will reach a saturation point beyond which their particular level of homogeneity will no longer suffice to hold them together as a group. In other words, if two persons have much in common, it stands to reason that they will be able to interact frequently and intensely without realizing too many serious differences among themselves; on the other hand, if they do not have much in common, their relationship will have a relatively low saturation point which will be reached and surpassed with any substantial degree of interaction and the group will cease to exist. Then, the more homogeneity among the members of a group, the higher the saturation point in their relationship and the more frequently and intensely they will be able to interact without reaching the saturation point.

Unless the initial saturation point is extremely high because of a high degree of homogeneity, mutual choice best buddy dyad members who share a room may be forced into a situation where they must interact so frequently and intensely that the saturation point will be reached and the existence of the group will be endangered. Those mutual choice dyad members who do not share a room may form more stable groups because they are not obliged to interact often enough or intensely enough to force their relationship beyond the saturation point and thus to dissolution.

In the two cases where the dyad members shared their room with a third man it is possible that their saturation point was raised due to the presence of the third man. According to Simmel's notion of the *tertius gaudens*, two of the members of a three person group tend to ally themselves against the third; hence, according to the line of thought being developed here, the dyad members would raise their saturation point because they would have their opposition to the third man as an additional attitude or interest in common.[16]

[16] See Kurt Wolff, translator and editor, *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1950, pp. 154-62.

THREE DIMENSIONS OF STATUS: A STUDY OF ACADEMIC PRESTIGE*

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Davis's analysis of stratification[1] presents a systematically ordered set of variables for conceptualizing the many isolated and often seemingly disparate findings on status differentiation. The long range contribution of this endeavor has, however, been reduced by the failure of stratification researchers to proceed much beyond the mere advocacy or criticism of Davis's analytical scheme.[2] Little progress has been made in developing procedures for testing its empirical adequacy or in formulating alternative conceptual models. The result has been a stagnation of inquiry in what otherwise might, and should, be a core area of stratification analysis.

The present paper reports a study undertaken to test in a limited way the usefulness of Davis's model for interpreting status differences in the academic world. Because of the impracticability of testing all facets of the conceptual system, the inquiry concerned itself with the principles of structural determinacy, functional importance, and judgmental impartiality that implicitly, if not explicitly, occupy a central position in Davis's theoretical approach. It should be emphasized that the significance of the research rests not on its substantive findings *per se*—which must be regarded as tentative in the light of the restricted sub-population studied—but rather on the conceptual issues posed and the method advanced for resolving these issues.

The following three questions were considered in the research reported here. For purposes of exposition, they have been phrased in terms of status differences among university professors. It should, however, be kept in mind that the questions are of more general relevance for the theoretical and empirical investigation of status phenomena and, accordingly, can be rephrased so as to apply to other organizational settings.

1. *Is a professor's status within a university significantly related to the admiration he receives for possessing socially approved personal qualities?*[3] Of issue here is the structural determinism that characterizes Davis's theory of stratification. From Davis's point of view, a professor's status within a university would be determined by the combined effect of two structurally related scales of evaluation; the *prestige* he is accorded for his formal position, or office, in the university, and the *esteem* he gains for the effectiveness with which the obligations of the professorial role are discharged.[4] There is, however, some evidence in recent stratification research, to indicate that such a bi-dimensional approach is too circumscribed in that no allowance is made for the effect that evaluations of personal qualities (*e.g.*, cordiality or appearance) might have on status judgments.[5] Consequently, it is hypothesized that

[1] Kingsley Davis, "Conceptual Analysis of Stratification," *American Sociological Review*, 7 (June, 1942), pp. 309-321; Kingsley Davis, *Human Society*, New York: MacMillan Company, 1949, pp. 91-96, 364-391; Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification," *American Sociological Review*, 10 (April, 1945), pp. 242-249.

[2] Cf. the recent exchange of criticism between Buckley, Davis, and Levy. Walter Buckley, "Social Stratification and the Functional Theory of Social Differentiation," *American Sociological Review*, 23 (August, 1958), pp. 369-375; Walter Buckley, "A Rejoinder to Functionalists Dr. Davis and Dr. Levy," *American Sociological Review*, 24 (February, 1959), pp. 84-86; Kingsley Davis, "The Abominable Heresy: A Reply to Dr. Buckley," *American Sociological Review*, 24 (February, 1959), pp. 82-83; Marion J. Levy, Jr., "Functionalism: A Reply to Dr. Buckley," *American Sociological Review*, 24 (February, 1959), pp. 83-84.

[3] Status is used throughout this paper to designate what has been described by Goldhammer and Shils as the "total status judgment" accorded an individual in a given social system. The term prestige, would in many respects be preferable to status for designating this evaluative phenomenon, but it seemed that more confusion than benefit would derive from altering, at this late date, the fairly widely accepted technical meaning of positional evaluation that Davis has given the concept of prestige. See Herbert Goldhammer and Edward A. Shils, "Types of Power and Status," *American Journal of Sociology*, 45 (September, 1939), pp. 171-182.

[4] Davis has never explicitly considered the problem of how prestige and esteem judgments combine. Nevertheless, as both Gordon and Hatt have recognized, it is implicit in Davis's scheme that these segmental judgments do combine in individual cases. See Milton M. Gordon, *Social Class in American Sociology*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1958, p. 176; Paul K. Hatt, "Stratification in the Mass Society," *American Sociological Review*, 15 (April, 1950), pp. 216-222.

[5] Ellis, for instance, has shown in a study of a Jamaican market town that the extrinsic personal quality of racial appearance can partially determine social status. A multiple correlation analysis that held constant the effects of education, house type, income, and occupation indicated that judgments of racial features independently contributed to the social status a person was given by his fellow townspeople. See Robert A. Ellis, "Color and Class in a Jamaican Market Town," *Sociology and Social Research*, 41 (May-June, 1957), pp. 354-360.

it is necessary to distinguish still a third, and in this case, a non-structural dimension of status: namely, the *admiration* an individual receives for possessing socially approved personal qualities.[6]

2. *Is a professor's status within a university significantly influenced by the esteem he receives for teaching effectively?* Fundamental to Davis's analysis is the principle of functional importance which postulates that an individual's status in a social system is commensurate with his contribution to the functioning of that system. It is clear this principle applies to esteem as well as prestige judgments, since people are evaluated not only for the potential contribution to the system their positional rights and duties make possible, but also for the effectiveness with which this potential is realized. This being the case, a critical test of the principle of functional importance can be made by determining whether the effective performance of a functionally important role does serve, in fact, as a sufficient condition for gaining status. The academic world provides an excellent setting for such a test since this principle runs contrary to the common observation that teaching is a functionally significant but unhonored task in the university.[7]

3. *Is a professor's status within a university judged impartially?* It is implicit in Davis's analysis that members of a social system can, and do, impartially evaluate status as well as the associated criteria on which status evaluations are based. Otherwise, there would be no basis for postulating, as Davis has done, that these evaluations operate as a generalized reward to attract qualified persons for the staffing of functionally important positions, and, once so recruited, to motivate them to perform their role tasks in continuously effective fashion.[8] This is an assumption that clearly requires empirical verification.[9]

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[6] A similar conclusion has been reached independently by Gordon who has added to Davis's two dimensions of prestige and esteem a third of "repute." The latter is defined by Gordon as representing the evaluation made of "certain personal qualities apart from any particular role performance." Gordon, however, does not report any empirical test of the influence of repute on status ratings. See Milton M. Gordon, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-246.

[7] Theodore Caplow and Reece J. McGee, *The Academic Marketplace,* New York: Basic Books, 1958, pp. 81-86, 145-147, 220-222; Logan Wilson, *The Academic Man*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1942, pp. 175-194.

[8] A corollary to this is the assumption that the majority of members of a social system judge each other's status in accurate fashion. While no test of this assumption has been made in the present study, procedures for this purpose are being developed for future researches.

[9] For an excellent summary and discussion of the many social psychological conditions that can distort interpersonal perception, see Jerome S. Bruner and Renato Taiguri, "The Perception of People," in Gardner Lindzey, ed., *Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol. II,* Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954, pp. 634-654.

PROCEDURES

Data for the study of the three questions above are the ratings on status, prestige, esteem, and admiration faculty members in a large metropolitan university received from their graduate students. Initially, it was planned to secure these ratings for all full professors from the six social science departments, but a pre-test revealed this was not feasible. Though these departments were located in the same building and were bound by interdisciplinary ties, many students were totally unaware of the identity of professors outside their own department. Consequently, it was decided to limit the study to status differences among the staff members of a single department.

The teachers rated comprised the male members of the regular psychology department faculty. Included were five full professors, two associate professors, one assistant professor, and one instructor.

To insure the raters' being familiar with the internal structure of the department, only those graduate students were selected as subjects who met the dual criteria of having been officially accepted as candidates for an advanced degree and of having been in continuous residence for one year or more. Five of the twenty-two students meeting these criteria were not used as subjects because of their lack of knowledge of one or more of the departmental faculty. The remaining seventeen students had spent an average of three years in the department and, on the average, had taken courses with six of the nine faculty in the study. Ten of the seventeen were clinical and seven non-clinical students in psychology.

The students, using a ten-centimeter linear rating scale, estimated each professor's percentile standing in the university on the five following factors: university status, teaching performance, professional prominence, cordiality, and professorial appearance.

During the course of face-to-face interviews, each student was given a schedule that contained a separate rating page for each of the five factors. On a given rating page there were: (1) a brief statement of instructions for rating the factor under evaluation, (2) nine vertically arranged linear scales which, for the raters' convenience, had been divided into quintiles, and (3) the names of the nine psychology department faculty members affixed to the bottom of the scales. To maximize the possibility of obtaining a wide distribution of percentile estimates as well as to give the respondents a common base line for their ratings, the students were instructed to judge each of the nine faculty members in comparison with other faculty members in the university. For example, on the factor of professional prominence, the students were given the following instructions: "Compared with the other faculty members at this university, how does each of the following staff members

rate in terms of their professional prominence?"

The formal academic position the professor held in the university (*i.e.*, his faculty rank) furnished a sixth factor for analysis.

The six factors indicated above provided operational measures of status and its three hypothesized dimensions of prestige, esteem, and admiration. The ratings of university status were taken as a measure of the status variable, since they constituted an evaluation of general standing in the institution. This measure was treated as the dependent variable in the analysis. Faculty rank served as an indicator of prestige that appeared entirely consistent with the positional character Davis has specified for this variable. For the dimensions of esteem, two different measures were used. One was professional prominence, an evaluation of a professor's skill in fulfilling the obligations incumbent upon him as a scholar. The second was teaching performance, an evaluation of a professor's skill in carrying out his role obligations as a teacher. For the operational definition of admiration, Hiller's distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic personal qualities was adopted.[10] Professorial appearance served as a measure of the former since it furnished an indication of the extent to which a professor conforms in his extrinsic qualities to the dominant stereotype of how an academician should look. The ratings of the faculty in regard to their cordiality served as a measure of the admiration given staff members for their intrinsic personal qualities. The conceptual categories and their operational measures are listed below:

Concept	Operational Measure
status	university status
prestige	faculty rank
esteem	professional prominence
esteem	teaching performance
admiration	professorial appearance
admiration	cordiality

After completing the ratings, the respondents were asked to designate the professors they knew personally and to

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[10] E. T. Hiller, *Social Relations and Structure*, Harper & Brothers, 1947, pp. 190-215. The decision to use dual measures of admiration and esteem can be better understood when the long-range goals of the present study are explicated. This study was undertaken as the first of a projected series of researches on the analytical dimensions of status and their organizational arrangements. Of general concern in this endeavor was the question of whether patterns of status evaluation vary categorically with different types of organizational settings. It was hypothesized that in large, bureaucratic organizations, such as a university, where social relationships are impersonal, segmental, and to a large degree governed by formal rules and conventions, that status distinctions would be affectively neutral. That is, status would be related to instrumental (*i.e.*, task-oriented) role behavior and to extrinsic personal qualities, but not to expressive role behaviors or intrinsic personal qualities. The latter, it was hypothesized, would only have saliency in *gemeinschaft*-type organizations, such as a small college, where the fine shadings of personal relationships are treated less indifferently.

indicate whether their feelings towards them were: very friendly, friendly, neutral, unfriendly, or very unfriendly. These data provided a means for determining whether students were biased in evaluating staff members for whom they had strong likes or dislikes.

RESULTS

Rating Consensus. It was first necessary to determine whether there was sufficient agreement among raters to evidence the operation of a socially patterned system of status. For this, concordance tests (*i.e.*, Kendall's W) were computed for each factor judged by the students.[11] For all five factors, a statistically significant ($p < .01$) level of consensus was obtained. However, concordance coefficients of .28 for cordiality and .26 for teaching performance indicate that the students' judgments of these factors were presumably governed more by individual considerations than were their judgments of university status, professional prominence, and professorial appearance, where concordance coefficients of .57, .55, and .41 were obtained.

Another test of consensus was made by correlating the median rankings given the faculty on the several factors by the ten clinical and the seven non-clinical psychology students. It was thought that students enrolled in these separate programs might, as a result of their different professional interests and the selectivity of their curriculum experiences, employ different standards in judging the departmental faculty. This, however, was not the case. With the exception of a .83 correlation between the average rankings obtained from the two groups on the factor of teaching performance, all correlations were .90 or higher.

Correlates of University Prestige. Once status consensus had been tested, it was then possible to determine the relationship of the several factors under study to the dependent variable, university status, and to each other. For each student, 15 correlations (rhos) were calculated—one for every possible combination of factors. The average value of each set of correlations was computed by use of Fisher's *z*, and the results are presented in Table 1.[12]

Two discrete clusters of factors are revealed by the data

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11. For this and subsequent tests where ordinal scale distributions were required, the percentile scores were converted into ranks. Wherever necessary, corrections were made for the presence of tied ranks.

12. See R. A. Fisher, *Statistical Methods for Research Workers*, London and Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1925, pp. 168-169. Use of Fisher's method for averaging correlations from small samples provided us 102 degrees of freedom for interpreting the significance of each of the average correlations computed. Some caution should be exercised in drawing interpretations from these average values since their calculation rests on two somewhat arbitrary assumptions; namely, that the basic data are bivariate-normal distributed and that the 17 correlations obtained for each given pair of variables are independent estimates of the same population correlation.

of this table. The first consists of the three intercorrelated factors of faculty rank, professional prominence, and professorial appearance, all of which had a significantly high association with university status. The second cluster comprises the two related factors of teaching performance and cordiality. Their correlation with university status was in both cases extremely low and significantly smaller than the correlations observed for the first cluster.[13] Moreover, with but the one exception of the .39 correlation found between professorial appearance and teaching performance, these two factors were randomly or negatively associated with the factors in cluster 1.

Table 1. AVERAGE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN
SIX SELECTED STATUS FACTORS

		Factors				
			Cluster 1		Cluster 2	
Factors	University Status A	Faculty Rank B	Professional Prominence C	Professorial Appearance D	Teaching Performance E	Cordiality F
A	1.00	.54*	.81*	.45*	.13	.18
B	____	1.00	.71*	.47*	−.22*	−.17
C	____		1.00	.53*	.03	.04
D	____			1.00	.39*	.05
E	____				1.00	.41*
F	____					1.00

* One-tailed tests (102 degrees of freedom) indicate coefficients differ significantly from zero at the .01 level.

While conclusions that might be drawn from these data are limited by the fact that the degrees of freedom were too small to permit a multiple regression analysis, it is nevertheless apparent that in this departmental setting, the intra-university status ratings given a professor by his graduate students were highly and significantly related to (1) the prestige deriving from his formal position, or office, (2) the esteem deriving from his reputation as a competent scholar, and (3) the admiration deriving from the prevailing stereotype of how a professor should look. Conversely, the students' status judgments were only in a minor way related to the evaluations made of the professor's effectiveness as a teacher or of his personal affability.

Judgmental Impartiality. The findings so far leave unanswered the question of whether students would be biased in judging the status of professors for whom they had particularly strong positive or negative feelings. To test the latter possibility, it was necessary to categorize the students' affective orientation to the departmental staff. On the basis of the friendship data obtained in the inter-

views, the following three patterns of orientation were distinguished:

1. *Affective Orientation.* The response of "very friendly" was treated as evidence of a positively affective orientation to a staff member. There were 36 responses of this type, the responses being widely, though not necessarily randomly, distributed in the student and faculty populations. Sixteen of the seventeen students reported being on very friendly terms with at least one staff member in the department, and every member of the faculty had at least one very friendly response directed toward him.

2. *Negative Orientation.* Responses of "unfriendly" or "very unfriendly" were treated as evidence of negatively affective orientation to the faculty. Such negative responses were decidedly in the minority, occurring just 13 times. Only nine students contributed to this total, and their responses were directed to only five members of the staff.

3. *Intermediate Orientation.* Responses of "neutral" or "friendly" were treated as evidence of an intermediate level of affective orientation. From the standpoint of both student and faculty, this was the modal category. Of the 153 friendship ratings obtained, 104 were classifiable as intermediate.

Student-faculty relationships were classified according to these categories. The mean percentile status rating each professor received from students in each of the three categories of relationship to him was then computed, and the mean differences between the three sets of ratings were calculated for each of the five factors under evaluation. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEAN RATINGS OF PROFESSORS
BY STUDENTS WITH POSITIVE, NEGATIVE, AND
INTERMEDIATE AFFECTIVE ORIENTATION*

Factor	Students' Ratings Being Compared		
	Positive vs. Intermediate (N=9)	Negative vs. Intermediate (N=5)	Positive vs. Negative (N=5)
University Status			
Differences of Means	6.20	−18.90	27.90
t	1.37	− 2.13	3.25
p	.15	.05	.01
Professional Prominence			
Differences of Means	4.39	−18.30	22.48
t	1.33	− 4.82	3.82
p	.15	.01	.01
Professorial Appearance			
Differences of Means	8.13	− 3.50	12.04
t	3.20	− 0.75	2.23
p	.01	.25	.05
Cordiality			
Differences of Means	22.84	−13.10	33.90
t	6.94	− 2.05	8.23
p	.01	.10	.01
Teaching Performance			
Differences of Means	4.62	− 8.04	13.86
t	1.17	− 1.84	1.68
p	.15	.10	.10

* One-tailed t tests were used in the analysis.

[13] A test was made of the differences between the correlation coefficients from each cluster that were most closely approximate in value (the .18 correlation of cordiality with university status and .45 correlation of professorial appearance with university status). A normal deviate of 1.89 was obtained, which a one-tailed test indicated to be statistically significant at the five per cent level.

The findings show that personal bias substantially influenced the students' judgments of their professors.[14] As might be expected, the greatest judgmental discrepancies are yielded when the extremes on affective orientation are compared. Here it is found that the percentile estimates professors received from positively oriented students were, on the average, 12.04 to 33.90 points higher than the percentile estimates received from negatively oriented students. Moreover, with but one exception, these differences yielded one-tailed t values that were statistically significant at the 5 per cent level or below. The one exception is the factor of teaching performance where a t value of 1.68 was obtained. While failing to meet the 5 per cent criterion, the value of t was clearly in the direction of significance and thus in accordance with the general finding that the assumption of judgmental impartiality is untenable for the present data.

DISCUSSION

A major concern of this paper has been the assumption of structural determinacy in Davis's analysis of stratification. The findings reported above, while consistent with the significance Davis has attached to the prestige and esteem dimensions of status, suggest very strongly that a bi-dimensional approach to status differences is incomplete. They support the hypothesis that status is related to the possession of extrinsic personal qualities which other members of the system deem appropriate for the positional incumbent. Accordingly, the findings are consistent with the premise that admiration constitutes a third dimension of status.

Aside from its empirical relevance, a three dimensional approach to status adds conceptual clarity to stratification analysis. Although Davis has explicitly stipulated that esteem is a role concept, pertaining to the evaluations of an individual's competence in carrying out his positional obligations and duties, subsequent writers have tended to confuse the evaluation of personal qualities with esteem. Williams, for instance, has defined esteem as " ... valuation of ... personal qualities ... or of ... performance of an accepted role,"[15] while Jaco and McElrath, in their

separately conducted studies to test the distinctiveness of prestige and esteem judgments, have operationally defined esteem in terms of intrinsic personal qualities.[16] Analytically, this represents a failure to distinguish between evaluations of what a person "has" and what he "does" and thus between a judgmental category which may have no direct bearing on the functional contribution an individual makes to the social system and another judgmental category which has been specifically conceived by Davis to measure that contribution.

To say that admiration of personal qualities does not necessarily reflect the contribution a person makes to the social system does not imply that this variable lacks systemic consequences. The possession of personal qualities deemed appropriate for a given social position may significantly influence a person's opportunity to gain access to that position, or once that position is taken, it may serve to legitimize the occupancy in the eyes of other members of the system. Thus, from the standpoint of leadership and morale, admiration judgments may be instrumental to the effective operation of a social system;[17] but they need not be. They may have consequences which are clearly dysfunctional for the system, as in the situation where racial-ethnic prejudice hampers a competent individual from effectively enacting his role.

A second problem of concern in this paper has been the validity of the functional explanation of status differences. Here effort has been directed to reducing Davis's abstract functional-status relationships to reasonably precise and testable hypotheses. While in the process, the scope of the theoretical analysis has been limited to a specific organizational setting, the findings obtained would nevertheless appear to have relevance for the functional theory of status in its more general form.

More particularly, the data suggest two fundamental shortcomings of the functional explanation. One is the principle that status inequalities stem from, and in a sense constitute, social measures of the differing extent to which individuals contribute to a given social system. It is difficult to reconcile this principle with the finding of the present

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[14] The t test for differences between correlated means was used for analyzing the judgmental data. When this test is used on relatively small samples with large variances, its power is considerably reduced. Since our sample was small and the variance relatively large, the estimate of the significance of the differences reported here is conservative. Cf. Quinn McNemar, *Psychological Statistics*, John Wiley and Sons, 1955, pp. 104-114. It should be noted that the systematic bias observed at the individual level is sufficiently scattered throughout the student and faculty populations so that it introduces a quasi-random error in the findings obtained. The resultant loss of reliability has the effect of attenuating the concordance and correlation coefficients computed in previous phases of the analysis.

[15] Robin Williams, *American Society*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952, p. 88.

[16] Both Jaco and McElrath have used, as their operational measure of esteem, raters' judgments of "how well that persons succeeded in being a person." Although somewhat ambiguous in meaning, this measure appears to be related to evaluations of an individual's personal qualities rather than of an individual's role competence. See E. Gartley Jaco, "Prestige and Esteem as Power Components," *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, 33 (March, 1953), pp. 319-327; Dennis G. McElrath, "Prestige and Esteem Identification in Selected Urban Areas," *Research Studies of the State College of Washington*, 23 (June, 1955), pp. 130-137.

[17] Newcomb, for example, maintains that "morale is good in a group whose designated leaders are respected for the particular qualities valued by its members, and that morale is poor in another group whose leaders are not respected because they are thought to lack those qualities." See Theodore Newcomb, *Social Psychology*, New York: The Dryden Press, 1950, p. 651.

research that ratings of a university professor's skill in the performance of the functionally important task of teaching bore no relationship to ratings of his university status. This negative evidence assumes even greater significance from the fact that it is not based on the judgments of an academician by his colleagues but on judgments made of him by his students—individuals who have the most to gain from the teacher's carrying out effectively this facet of the professorial role.

The second shortcoming relates to the principle that status evaluations, themselves, represent a functionally effective system of rewards which, in Davis and Moore's terms, "insure that the most important positions are *conscientiously* filled by the most qualified person."[18] Implicit in the latter principle is the assumption that members of a social system rationally calculate an individual's contribution to the system and then impartially and accurately appraise status in terms of these calculations. The findings of the investigation reported here are incompatible with this assumption in two ways. First, they suggest that non-rational elements—in the form of stereotyped admiration responses—enter into status evaluations. Second, the findings offer tentative evidence of the significant influence personal bias has on status judgments.

SUMMARY

A study of academic status in a large university was undertaken as a limited test of selected principles basic to

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[18] Davis and Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 243. (Italics are those of the present authors.)

Davis's theory of stratification. Ratings of their departmental faculty by graduate students in psychology yielded the following findings:

1. Sufficiently similar judgmental standards were used to evidence the operation of a commonly defined system of status.

2. A professor's status in the university was not only related to the positional factor of prestige and the role factor of esteem but also to the personal quality factor of admiration.

3. Admiration was judged segmentally so that admiration of extrinsic but not intrinsic personal qualities had relevance for status.

4. Similarly, esteem judgments were segmental so that evaluations of a professor's skill in carrying out the functionally important task of teaching bore only random relationship to the status ratings given him.

5. Judgments of status (and its correlates) were subject to personal bias when students were rating staff members whom they strongly liked or disliked.

It is quite evident that the results of a single study, particularly when derived from data collected from a limited sub-population, cannot of themselves constitute a definitive test of a theoretical system. Nevertheless, the failure in this given setting to obtain confirmation for the principles of structural determinacy, functional importance, and judgmental impartiality suggest that there is urgent need for further empirical studies of the order reported here. If the findings of such studies should corroborate those of the present investigation, substantial revision of the structural-functional theory will be indicated if it is to serve as an appropriate model for conceptualizing stratification phenomena.

PERSONNEL OFFICES AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF EMPLOYEE RIGHTS*

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Growth in the size and organizational complexity of modern American industrial enterprises has given rise to special concern in some quarters about the position of individual employees within these enterprises. Where an increasingly bureaucratized supervisor-worker relationship has come to replace the more personalized employment relationship characteristic of smaller firms, the question may be raised: What happens to the individual? Does he tend to become more and more anonymous and depersonalized—simply an economic commodity to be bought and sold in an impersonal labor market? Or are there any forces which tend to enhance human dignity and status among employees in larger firms?

There are indications that such forces do exist. They typically originate both in the external environment and in the internal conditions that are characteristic of modern large scale enterprises. Perhaps the most obvious and most dramatic of the forces that have contributed to increasing managerial recognition of employee claims to job security and protection from arbitrary treatment have been the interrelated processes of unionization, collective bargaining, and grievance arbitration.[1]

But these processes reflect external pressures; there are also other forces that have their origin and nurture in the dynamic development of bureaucratic enterprise itself. This paper will discuss one such force—the way in which "staff" personnel agencies and specialists within these agencies act to support the institutionalization of concepts of employee "rights."

More specifically, it shall be indicated that the "privileges" that firms have granted employees ostensibly for the purposes of increasing morale and loyalty to the organization have now become more or less irrevocable commitments on the part of these enterprises. They have become "institutionalized" as part of the established pattern of mutual expectations of management officials and employees alike.[2] They cannot be abandoned without changing significantly the character of the enterprises concerned. The structural support for this development is embodied in the activities of personnel specialists.

The evidence offered here in support of this thesis must be considered as illustrative, rather than conclusive, at this stage of research. This evidence is based in part upon exploratory interviews with forty-four personnel executives in leading enterprises in a large metropolitan area. The interviews were conducted during the course of a survey in 1958 under the auspices of the Institute of Industrial Relations of the University of California, Berkeley.

To understand what has occurred within industrial enterprises, it is useful first to review briefly the formal position of personnel departments as "staff" agencies in business enterprises.

PERSONNEL OFFICES: STAFF OR LINE?

Personnel administration as a specialized staff function has arisen, in part, out of the functional necessities of large-scale bureaucratic enterprises and partly as a result of certain historical circumstances.

As industrial enterprises have increased in size and complexity, they have become characterized by what Max Weber described as the characteristics of bureaucracy in its "ideal type." Among these characteristics is functional specialization and impersonality in the relationship of top management to employees at the lowest levels of the organizational hierarchy. Impersonality in the employment relationship has necessitated specialized personnel agencies which are charged with the function of establishing uniform personnel practices to integrate employees into an impersonalized organizational context. Specialization of the personnel function has proceeded along the same lines as specialization of other functions in the enterprise; e.g., finance, public relations, purchasing, transportation, etc.

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[1] See for example, Orme Phelps, *Discipline and Discharge in the Unionized Firm*, Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1959.

[2] See Philip Selznick, *Leadership in Administration*, Evanston, Ill.: Row Peterson, 1957, pp. 5-22, for discussion of the concept of "institutionalization," as used in the present paper.

Among the historical conditions that particularly contributed to the establishment of staff personnel and industrial relations departments in American industrial enterprises are: the concern with efficient utilization of manpower arising out of the scientific management movement and developments in World War I; labor legislation in the 1920's and 1930's that imposed special conditions of employment and employee treatment upon affected organizations; the growth of the trade union movement and resultant management concern with the "divided loyalty" of employees; and the human relations movement, emphasizing employee counseling procedures and attention to the "human" element in production.[3]

Personnel offices may operate under a number of different titles. Among these titles are "labor relations office," "industrial relations office," "employment office," "manpower management office," and 'employee relations office." A distinction frequently is made between "personnel" functions, as those concerned with intra-firm problems of personnel administration, and "labor relations" functions, as those concerned with union-management relations. Only intra-firm problems of personnel administration are considered in this paper.

A study by Dale Yoder in 1954 reported that at least 70 per cent of firms surveyed reported the following functions for their "employment relations" departments: (1) administration of the staff division; (2) planning of personnel policy, programs, and organization; (3) job analysis, recruitment, and selection; (4) training of personnel; (5) promotion, transfer, and release; (6) labor relations; (7) employee benefits and services; (8) medical and safety functions; (9) wage and salary administration; (10) personnel records and reports; and (11) personnel research.[4]

Regardless of what functions personnel offices perform, their formal position within the managerial structure is usually conceived of by management as a *staff* position. Nevertheless, in actual practice it may be maintained that personnel departments in many cases exercise line functions; that is, *direct* control over personnel management affairs within the firm, in spite of their formal position as staff agencies.

This control over personnel matters is manifested in the written personnel policies of some firms. In the Jones and Laughlin Steel Company, for example, the Director of Personnel Relations is responsible for continuous review of the personnel relations activities in the various operations of the corporation and for compliance with corporation-wide objectives, policies, and programs in this regard.[5] Similarly, a personnel executive in a large railroad transportation company told the authors:

> We have an enlightened management as far as labor relations is concerned. Our president has pointed out repeatedly that anything that affects labor relations must be approved by the personnel department. He has also said that in doubtful matters the personnel department will determine whether the particular matter affects labor relations or not.

In a mineral processing company, the director of industrial relations stated:

> In some firms labor relations departments have very little authority—the authority in personnel matters is vested in the line management. But here we do have considerable authority over line operations on labor relations and personnel matters.

Frequently, the formal authority of personnel departments is most strongly developed in matters which have to do with discipline and discharge, and grievance actions arising therefrom. A Bureau of National Affairs study reported that most companies provide some type of procedure for the review of disciplinary and discharge actions before such actions become effective. It was found that in approximately one-third of all companies surveyed this review is made by the personnel or industrial relations department. In another third of the companies the review is conducted by the personnel department plus one or more line management executives. In the remaining firms the review procedure is commonly handled entirely by line supervision—for example, by the department head or the plant manager.[6]

An example of a management initiated policy which includes review procedures by the personnel department is the following excerpt regarding "relief from duty in departments" from a nonunionized department store:

> It is our desire that all separations be conducted in a manner which will satisfy the employee that we have attempted to extend him every consideration and that we are willing to reopen his case on the basis of any facts presented by him which may not have been given adequate consideration.
>
> Immediate supervisors of employees may request the Relief from Duty within their department of any employee considered unsatisfactory with the concurrence of the Department Heads, but under no circumstances may terminate any employee from the Store's employ.
>
> Department Heads shall consult the Employment Depart-

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[3] For a review of these historical influences on the development of personnel and industrial relations activities, see *Evolution of Industrial Relations, 1922-1952*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University, Industrial Relations Section, *Selected References No. 47*, 1952.

[4] Dale Yoder, *How Much Do Personnel Activities Cost? The 1954 Budget Study*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Industrial Relations Center, *Reprint Series No. 15*, 1954.

[5] Louis A. Allen, *Organization of Staff Functions*, New York: National Industrial Conference Board, Studies in Personnel Policy No. 165, 1958, p. 58.

[6] Bureau of National Affairs, *Disciplinary Practices and Policies*, Bureau of National Affairs, *Survey No. 42*; Washington, D. C.: 1957, p. 9.

ment on all questions pertaining to the Relief from Duty of any employee considered unsatisfactory, prior to the discussion of the matter with such employee.

Department Heads shall, when requesting the Relief from Duty of any employees, justify such requests by submitting to the Employment Department written reports covering the record of warnings.

The Employment Department shall, whenever possible, recommend the transfer of employees Relieved from Duty, provided the Merit Rating of the employee is satisfactory. In the consideration of all cases of Reliefs from Duty, the Employment Department shall consult with the Merit Rating Department, Training Department, and others interested in order to determine that all pertinent facts have been considered. . . .[7]

This mixture of staff and line functions in the operation of personnel offices may be more evident than in the case of other "staff" specialties. The primary function of line management in productive enterprises is to produce certain products. Financial, public relations, purchasing, transportation, legal, and other staff functions are clearly ancillary to the primary line management objective of achieving production goals. On the other hand, as management officials themselves are likely to point out, production goals cannot be achieved except through the cooperative efforts of the employees involved. Thus, it is not surprising that personnel management often becomes a "line" function.

In this discussion, however, we are not interested merely in the confusion of staff-line distinctions which characterize modern personnel management; we are also interested in changes in certain value orientations which arise out of this dilemma within the organization of industrial enterprises.

EMERGENT VALUES IN PERSONNEL POLICIES

The managerial rationale behind the establishment of personnel offices in most firms has given prominent emphasis to the promotion of employee morale, harmony, and loyalty to the goals of the organization. The Carborundum Company, for example, includes the following statement among its personnel policies in regard to the functions of its personnel department:

To maintain high morale, enthusiasm, and loyalty to the interests of the company. To promote good understanding and cooperation among the company's personnel. To create a sense of belonging, so that all employees are working toward a common goal.[8]

This orientation is expressed also in the personnel policies of the Lukens Steel Company, S. C. Johnson and Son, and others.[9]

[7] Quoted by Helen Baker and Robert R. France, *Personnel Administration and Labor Relations in Department Stores*, Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University, Department of Economics and Social Institutions, Industrial Relations Section, 1950, pp. 54-55.

[8] Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[9] *Ibid.*

In such policies, high value is placed upon cooperative effort. The means proposed to achieve this objective is manipulation of employee attitudes toward the firm. Involved here is the assumption that it is within the ability of personnel specialists, using the technical skills of their trade, to select and motivate employees toward a high degree of harmonious cooperation and productive effort.

The philosophy of manipulation has had its eloquent exponents in the literature of management. Mr. L. A. Appley wrote at the time of his presidency of the American Management Association:

. . . competitive survival depends upon the capacity of management to increase the individual productivity of workers. . . . *The emergence of a new management era is the transferring of emphasis from technology to humanics.* It is the application of the same time, skill, effort, logic, understanding, knowledge, and competency to human resources which management applied so successfully in the past to physical resources.[10]

Similarly, a writer in *Personnel Journal* expressed explicitly the manipulative orientation in his discussion of "supervision by suggestion":

The effective supervisor today is a specialist in dealing with human relations. Understanding the forces that motivate people to cooperate is a powerful tool. It allows for the manipulation of human behavior to the mutual satisfaction of both the supervisor and those supervised.

The successful supervisor is frequently distinguished by his ability to make it appear that his wishes originated with the other person. The employee who usually displays a negative attitude is studied very carefully to find some way in which an idea he expresses, or something he says, can be interpreted to mean what the supervisor would like to have it mean. The supervisor then tries to get the employee to express the desired thought himself. When the worker can be made to feel that he himself originated the idea, he is committed to it in advance and rejection of the supervisor's instruction is circumvented. At the same time the worker is made to feel personally adequate and even influential.[11]

This manipulative orientation, however, is also reacting upon the character of industrial enterprises through the actions of the very agencies which were established with the explicit objectives of specializing in manipulation—personnel departments. Personnel specialists have operated in many firms to promote an attitude of adaptation to the presumed rights and interests of individual employees. The emergent concept of employee rights in personnel philosophy has perhaps been expressed most aptly by James Worthy of Sears, Roebuck and Company:

These ideals are usually expressed in terms of "rights"— the very word "rights" implying their essentially moral

[10] L. A. Appley, "Emergence of a New Management Era," *Personnel*, XXV (1949), pp. 429, 431.

[11] E. H. Jennings, "Supervision by Suggestion," *Personnel Journal*, XXXII (1954), pp. 288-292.

and ethical nature ... we may summarize some of the more significant of these rights as follows:

1. The right of every man to be treated as an individual and respected as a person;
2. The right of every man to a voice in his own affairs, which includes his right to contribute to the best of his ability to the solution of common problems;
3. The right of every man to develop and make use of his highest capacities;
4. The right of every man to fairness and justice in all his relationships with his superiors.[12]

Mutual recognition of employee rights concepts, which is promoted by the activities of personnel specialists, may be rationalized and expressed verbally in different ways. For example, a personnel executive in a chemical firm stated what he believed to be a relationship between employee rights concepts and "the American way of life":

> Because of the type of country we live in, where the individual is more important than any company, a man carries this idea about his rights into his work—this idea of his "dignity." Employees are particularly concerned with their rights to job security, fair treatment, and being respected by management and their fellow workers.

A personnel executive in a food processing and packing firm mentioned the relevance of employee rights concepts to the implicit meaning of the employment relationship to the parties concerned:

> There are actual rights and there are implied rights. Actual rights are overtly expressed in company policies and practices. Implied rights are implicit in the expectations of the mutual parties to a relationship—like the employment relationship. Usually, when employees talk about their rights, they are not referring to contract provisions. Employees use the term in a broader sense. For example, if an employee feels his supervisor has treated him ill, he speaks of his rights as an individual with human dignity. For an instance of this, an employee who is publicly reprimanded in front of other employees is likely to feel that his rights as a human being with dignity have been violated by the supervisor.

INSTITUTIONALIZED RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

The value orientations expressed in the previous comments of personnel specialists, however, tend to be merely ideological statements, rather than expressions of actual policy, if they lack institutionalized support. There seem to be three general sources of institutionalized support for the continued recognition of employee rights and their expanded acceptance in the future: (1) further formalization of the "line" authority of personnel offices in personnel management matters; (2) professionalization of personnel specialists; and (3) establishment of formal personnel policies that specify safeguards for employee rights.

Melville Dalton has pointed out that staff-line conflict

is to be expected in industrial enterprises as a result of the differing personal backgrounds and organizational functions of staff and line managerial personnel.[13] The additional point may be made that everyday conflicts between personnel specialists and line managerial officers are especially likely to occur because of confusion between "line" and "staff" responsibilities.

Arguments about proper personnel management practices are especially likely to occur in regard to disciplinary actions. Such disagreements were often indicated in the authors' survey of personnel executives. The personnel executives interviewed frequently reported that they see it as their responsibility to "sell" line management on what personnel specialists believe to be the proper procedures in disciplinary practices. Where their selling techniques are unsuccessful, they see it as their duty to take their cases to higher management for policy decisions. A personnel executive in the regional division of a large steel corporation reported:

> There are times when we believe line management at the plant level is wrong. Then they say, "God damn you, you're selling us down the river." Then we must sell them on the right way to handle discipline. We may even have to go to the company president if we have a firm disagreement with plant managers. (Steel manufacturing)

A personnel director in a shipyard stated:

> I have as many arguments with the back office (line management) as I do with union leaders. Yesterday I had a fight with one of our managers to get him to give an employee adequate notice before discharging him. (Marine construction and repair)

A personnel executive in a petroleum company reported:

> I'm employed by the company, but my responsibility is to the employee as well as to the company. Sometimes I have to fight for an employee with management. I have to ward off the impulsive actions of division heads. Believe me, one has to have the courage of his convictions to do this. (Petroleum products)

Insofar as personnel specialists "win" their arguments on personnel matters of these types, particularly in regard to disciplinary procedures, they act to limit the arbitrary powers of line management officials over employees. They promote a new orientation within the firm directed toward the acceptance of what has come to be considered the legitimate "rights" of employees.

Also, to the degree to which personnel specialists become professionalized and identified with status considerations with regard to their occupational associates in local communities and even nationally, they become more committed to standards of practice and codes of ethics which emphasize fair treatment and "due process" principles in

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[12] J. C. Worthy, "Changing Concepts of the Personnel Function," *Personnel*, XXV (1948), p. 172.

[13] Melville Dalton, "Conflicts between Staff and Line Managerial Officers," *American Sociological Review*, 15 (June, 1950), pp. 342-351.

dealing with employees. Several of the national professional personnel societies, such as the personnel section of the American Management Association and the Society for Personnel Administration, have been concerned with the establishment and general recognition of ethical codes that emphasize employee rights concepts.[14] Where such codes are accepted, the activities of personnel specialists within firms become less attributable to the individual ideas of individual personnel specialists and more referable to commonly accepted standards of personnel practice.

What is perhaps the most significant and potent mechanism for the institutionalized recognition of employee rights concepts has been the development of formalized personnel policies within industrial enterprises. In the Yoder study referred to earlier, it was indicated that "employment relations divisions" participate in the planning of policy programs and organization in eighty-six per cent of the firms surveyed.[15] The formal policies which result from this planning activity not only may give personnel specialists considerable authority in "line" personnel management functions, but also may specify in considerable detail the safeguards established to protect employee rights, particularly in disciplinary actions.

The Bureau of National Affairs has reported that about three-fourths of business firms have such written disciplinary regulations in the form of "plant rules." Many companies in the remaining fourth operate under rules that are well known to employees, even though they are not in written form.[16] The outlook for the future was summarized by a personnel executive in a paper products company in the following terms:

> In the future I see a continuing trend toward specifying and tightening disciplinary policies. Employees like to have a tight-run ship. They like to know that their supervisor will take the same action each day. They like to have rules and to have a part in creating them. They expect their discipline to be fair.

Formal disciplinary regulations not only have become more likely to specify causes for discipline but also more likely to define the severity of disciplinary action permitted in specified circumstances. Many plant rules have specific penalties attached to the violation of certain regulations. A high proportion of these simply state, "The following offenses may result in immediate dismissal."

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[14] See, for example, American Management Association, "Ethics in Personnel Administration," *Personnel*, 30 (1953), pp. 180-186; Society for Personnel Administration, *Professional Standards for Personnel Work*, S.P.A., "Pamphlet No. 13"; Washington, D. C.: 1956; T. Roy Reed, "Code of Personnel Administration for the Department of Agriculture," *Personnel Administration*, 7 (1945), pp. 11-12.

[15] Yoder, *How Much Do Personnel Activities Cost?*, op. cit.

[16] Bureau of National Affairs, *Disciplinary Practices and Policies*, op. cit., p. 2.

In other cases, however, plant rules may list certain types of actions for which an employee ordinarily is not subject to discarge in a first offense. For example, the rules of an electronics firm studied by the authors state:

> For offenses against safety, plant working, and employee conduct rules, other than those specifically mentioned under Section B below, an employee shall not be discharged without first having been notified that repetition of the offense will be cause for dismissal. The record of this notification shall be incorporated in the personnel record at the time it is given. . . .

In a shipyard, the disciplinary regulations make the following distinctions:

> Any employee committing any of the following violations shall be subject to discharge: (teen types of offenses are listed). . . .
> For any of the following offenses an employee will be given a pink (reprimand) slip: six types of offenses are listed). . . .
> Any employee issued a second pink slip will be given five days off. . . .
> Any employee issued a third pink slip for any of the above violations shall be discharged.

In the procedure for disciplinary action of a small parts manufacturing company, offenses are classified into three types with correspondingly greater severity of discipline: "minor offenses," "major offenses," and "intolerable offenses." In the same company the following instructions, written by the personnel director, are given to supervisors regarding discharge policy:

> Not every rule violation justifies dismissal. But there is a point at which discharge becomes proper by reason of either a single serious infraction or an accumulation of minor infractions. The following "yardstick" is suggested to determine whether this point has been reached:
>
> 1. Has the employee seriously or irreparably damaged the employer's trust and confidence in him? The importance of this test depends on the type of work done by the employee.
> 2. Does it seem likely that the employee will correct his deficiencies within a reasonable period of time if he is not fired?
> 3. What effect would retaining the employee have on the discipline and morale of other employees?
> 4. What about the individual himself? Does he have a long period of good service and, therefore, deserve special consideration? How would a discharge affect his job prospects elsewhere?
> 5. Finally, does discharge seem fair, all things considered? In other words, does the punishment fit the crime, taking into account any mitigating circumstances that might be present?

The existence of such gradated penalties for different types of offenses and a discharge policy such as that just cited both tend to restrain management from arbitrary disciplinary action.

The Bureau of National Affairs study reported that

among larger firms which have written plant rules about fifty per cent spell out the penalties for breaking each rule. According to this study, penalties for chronic absenteeism most frequently take the form of one or two warnings, then suspension, and then discharge—although in many firms suspension is not used and employees are discharged after one or two warnings. Insubordination is the basis of immediate discharge in about one-third of larger companies, although about the same proportion of companies report they do not discharge an employee until after one warning about insubordination. The penalty for fighting is immediate discharge in about half of the companies studied, whereas other companies treat a first offense with a warning or suspension.[17] As these disciplinary procedures are formalized, they become part of the pattern of legitimate expectations for both employers and employees. They establish standards of fair treatment that have become institutionalized.

SUMMARY AND BROADER IMPLICATIONS

Illustrative materials have been presented regarding the thesis that personnel specialists have operated in a manner that supports the institutionalization of employee rights in modern industrial enterprises. This support for employee rights on the part of personnel specialists has been facilitated by formalization of the direct (line) authority of personnel offices in personnel management matters, by

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17 *Ibid.*, pp. 2-4.

the professionalization of personnel specialists, and by the establishment of formal personnel policies that specify detailed safeguards for employee rights.

The extent of this phenomena in modern industrial enterprises is an appropriate subject for further research. Furthermore, in a broader context it may be suggested that similar transformations of functions of service departments other than personnel departments may take place as an organization continues in operation over an extended period of time. In this regard, the following general hypothesis may be offered, subject to further investigation and refinement: staff or service departments in an organization, which originally are set up by management as means to achieve organizational goals efficiently and which therefore depend upon other (line) departments to initiate their activities, will later tend to develop their own mechanisms to initiate and control the activities of line departments. In this manner the process of institutionalization within an organization means, in part, the transformation of an organization from a technical instrument to an adaptive organic system, responsive to the emergent interests of component agencies.

Thus it seems that component agencies within larger organizations eventually seek to protect their positions by developing unique competences that are jealously guarded and shared by no other organizational components. At the same time, the organizational dynamic that causes component agencies to develop their own competences provides also the internal structural support for value concepts.

THE FAILURE OF AN INCIPIENT SOCIAL MOVEMENT*

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A major goal of research and theory in collective behavior and in political sociology has been to specify the conditions which determine whether a social movement will be successful or unsuccessful. Conclusions from such investigation have generally been presented in one of two forms, either as a set of general conditions for success,[1] or as a characteristic life cycle incorporating different conditions at different stages of development.[2] The evidence for such generalizations has been drawn predominantly from case studies of conspicuously successful movements, emphasizing either the origin of the movement in socialized discontent or its characteristics as a fully developed movement. Two deficiencies in such data are notable, however. Without studies of unsuccessful movements there can be no assurance that the crucial conditions have been properly identified in the study of successful movements. And without sufficient study of movements in their earliest stages, life cycle generalizations must necessarily be based on uncertain historical reconstructions.

The objective of this report is to describe an incipient social movement which was (a) notably unsuccessful after an impressive beginning, and (b) could be observed almost contemporaneously at a very early stage. From the description an attempt will be made to specify the crucial circumstances which accounted for the failure of this movement to progress successfully beyond the stage of mass discontent and sporadic group protest. The generalizations are intended to apply to a movement which is value oriented and mass based. By *value oriented* is meant a movement which is "directed or limited in its activity and recruitment of adherents by its publicly understood program." By *mass based* is meant a movement that draws its support from a widespread public.[3]

If a movement is to constitute the basis for plausible generalizations of this type, two further conditions must be met. First, there must be sufficient evidence to suppose that the movement could have developed successfully under more favorable circumstances. Protest of many sorts is endemic and can be expected to subside in the normal course of events. Second, there must be sufficient evidence to judge that the movement has failed and is not merely passing through a stage of consolidation.

A movement which appears to meet all the essential conditions for this type of analysis is the Los Angeles County property tax protest which occurred during November and December of 1957. In the remainder of the paper, the term "tax" will refer to property tax. Inquiries concerning the tax protest were begun in the early spring of 1958. Metropolitan and suburban newspapers were examined for the entire relevant period. Interviews were secured with key figures in the movement and with officials in the local government and in interested private organizations. Periodic inquiries were made until December, 1958, to insure that the assessment of the movement's failure was correct. The history of this abortive movement will be briefly reviewed; evidence to indicate its potentiality for success will be given; and finally, the possible causes for its failure will be discussed.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TAX PROTEST

The receipt of county tax bills on November 5, 1957 marked the beginning of the tax protest movement. Taxes for 1957-58 were increased appreciably in Los Angeles County, particularly in the rapidly growing suburban areas. The office of the county tax assessor received many complaints by telephone during the days immediately following the receipt of the tax bills. Within weeks, a number of taxpayers' meetings, some of which were attended by councilmen and county supervisors, were held in various parts of the county. According to the report of one of the major newspapers, on November 8, "an angry 800 people jammed the Covina High School auditorium."[4] Another mass meeting which reportedly drew 1800 people was held at West Covina High School on November 13.[5] As a final

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[1] Theodore Abel, "The Pattern of a Successful Political Movement," *American Sociological Review*, 2 (June, 1937), pp. 347-52.

[2] Rex D. Hopper, "The Revolutionary Process: A Frame of Reference for the Study of Revolutionary Movement," *Social Forces*, 28 (March, 1950), pp. 270-79.

[3] Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian, *Collective Behavior*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1957, pp. 331-338.

[4] *The Los Angeles Herald Express*, November 9, 1957.

[5] This was reported by the most publicized local leader in the tax protest.

example, on November 26, 8000 people were said to have met at Mt. San Antonio College stadium to protest the increased taxes.[6] Newspapers, radio, and television maintained a running commentary which kept the public informed of these events. The tax protest ended, in effect, with a mass meeting at the Los Angeles Coliseum on December 6, 1957.

A certain amount of protest normally occurs every year in which there is an increase in taxes. The complexity of the system of arriving at final tax bills is responsible for the sudden impact on taxpayers of an increased tax bill, since it is seldom possible to anticipate the amount of the bill. The final tax bill is a composite of the individual rates of many taxing authorities who may change local rates independently of one another from year to year. The tax bill also reflects the assessed valuation on property, which is changed periodically. However, a cursory review of newspapers from previous years and the testimony of tax officials revealed nothing like the continuous attention the increased bills received in 1957. In previous years there was no indication that either neighborhood meetings or mass meetings had occurred.

A possible reason for the greater protest in 1957 is revealed by an examination of the distribution of the impact of the increased property taxes and the resulting popular protest. They tended to be concentrated in the following respects. The increased taxes were proportionately higher in suburban rather than metropolitan areas of the county and, more specifically, in newer suburbs rather than in older settled suburbs. The protest emanated largely from residential property owners. Apparently this greater protest was chiefly a result of the sudden rise in the value of property in new tract areas where persons were already burdened with maximum financing.

POTENTIALITY FOR SUCCESS

As a basis for judging whether the movement could have been successful, or whether it could have progressed successfully to the next stage, four essential characteristics for the birth of a movement have been assumed. In making a statement of these four conditions, we have drawn upon the works of Blumer, King and Hopper.[7] The stage in which we are interested corresponds approximately, but not perfectly, to the organizational stage as King uses it. It will be shown that the tax protest included these characteristics, thus indicating its potentiality for success.

First, there must be a precipitating event. In the case

of the tax protest, the precipitating event was the receipt of the increased tax bills which are mailed to all property owners on the same date. The bills are based on assessments made eight months prior to mailing. They are to be paid in two installments, approximately one half due within a month and the remainder within four months. The bill combines into one lump sum school district, city, and county taxes, as well as those of a large number of smaller taxing districts such as smog control district, garbage control district, etc.

Secondly, for a social movement to develop, individual discontent has to become socialized into social unrest. Individual discontent was first manifested by numerous telephone calls of protest to the tax assessor's office. This discontent became socialized into social unrest as neighbors discussed their increased tax bills with each other. Newspapers, radio, and television played an important part in this socialization process by making taxpayers aware of the widespread discontent. The extent of this preoccupation is indicated by such events as the following: a large number of radio and television programs were devoted to the pros and cons of the tax question; representatives of the tax assessor appeared several times to answer questions and to explain the procedures used in arriving at the tax bill; neighborhood newspapers featured the tax situation in news articles and editorial columns.

Next, there must be a focusing of the unrest on a specific object. In their search for a reason for higher taxes, taxpayers focused their unrest on the tax assessor. While the tax assessor does not set tax rates, his agents determine the assessed value of each taxpayer's property and thus in a direct way determine each property owner's share of the tax load. The extent to which attention was focused on the tax assessor was indicated by the number of occasions in which he was forced to defend himself in the public press and on radio and television.

Finally, there has to be spontaneous organization of the unrest. Many small neighborhood groups combined in a spontaneous organization of mass protest meetings. These meetings occurred throughout the county, but particularly in the areas where tax increases had been greatest. They were reported in such widely dispersed areas as Reseda and West Covina, in the extreme western and eastern portions of the county, respectively. Another manifestation of this phenomenon was the spontaneous inception of citizen tax committees initiated by city councilmen to study the tax structure.

There is ample evidence to justify regarding the tax protest movement as an unsuccessful social movement. While there were numerous spontaneous organizations, as mentioned above, these groups persisted as independent units, seldom cooperating and often working at cross purposes. As far as we know only one of these spontaneous

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[6] *The Los Angeles Mirror-News,* November 27, 1957.

[7] Herbert Blumer, "The Field of Collective Behavior," in Alfred McClung Lee, *Principles of Sociology,* New York: Barnes and Noble, 1953, Chapter 20, pp. 174-177 and Chapter 22, p. 203; C. Wendell King, *Social Movements in the United States,* New York: Random House, 1956, pp. 39-49; R. D. Hopper, *op. cit.*

organizations is still in existence. It is now a corporate body whose stated purpose is to study further the tax structure. The fact that the board of directors of this organization consists entirely of individuals from the same neighborhood is indicative of the diminished mass interest in the incipient movement.

The most striking evidence of failure was the overwhelming vote for re-election of the tax assessor in the June, 1958, primary elections. The incumbent received more votes (669,294) than the combined total (643,756) of the three other candidates for the office. A candidate sponsored by one of the protest organizations received approximately one-third of the number of votes accumulated by the tax assessor and only four-fifths of those received by a former employee with many years of experience in the tax assessor's office.

Furthermore, by midsummer of 1958 it became generally known that the county, city, and school taxes would be increased again in the following year. This knowledge appeared to have been accepted resignedly by the populace. Finally, the annual mailing of tax bills in November, 1958, brought no comparable protest and reactivated none of the earlier organizations, in spite of the fact that taxes were again higher than in the preceding year.

It is appropriate to ask whether any movement concerned with tax reform could have succeeded at this time, or whether such protest was not foredoomed to failure. Striking evidence in this connection is the aftermath of the movement in the suburb where the most active leaders of the movement lived. Several months after the movement ceased to be a power in the larger metropolitan community, it was announced that only this one school district in the entire county would have a reduced budget for the following year. Informed persons gave major credit for the reduction to the earlier public arousal over tax increases and the budget review by a vocal group in the area.[8]

DETERMINANTS OF FAILURE

Some protest may persist where the source of trouble is constantly present. But interest ordinarily cannot be maintained unless there is a welding of spontaneous groups into some stable organization which will supply effective communication, leadership, an ideology and plan of action, and a viable public image. Our objective is to explain why the tax protest movement failed to make a successful transition from the stage of scattered and sporadic groups to one of comprehensive organization embracing all the groups. There are four conditions which appear to be requisite for progression to this stage of organization. We shall take up these conditions in turn and examine the

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[8] This information was gathered from interviews with the assistant tax assessor and a well-known news commentator.

extent to which the tax protest met or failed to meet each of them.

Communication. First, there must be effective communication linking like-minded people over an extended area into one group whose images and actions can be effectively coordinated. Such communication would normally involve both the mass media, to which all are exposed, and special networks among those concerned in the movement. Such communication must supplement the person-to-person communication characterizing earlier stages.

The evidence suggests that the mass media provided adequate communication. Inadequate newspaper coverage can contribute to the failure of a movement to pass into the organizational stage. However, the newspaper coverage of the tax protest was extensive. With the exception of eight days during the period of thirty-one days covered by this study, one or more articles dealing with the tax protest appeared each day in the newspapers which were examined. In addition, our interviews disclosed no important occurrence that was not included in the newspaper accounts following the first big protest meeting.

Furthermore, it appears that the newspapers did not contribute to alienation of potential supporters from the leaders. Many movements fail because they are discredited by a public image of leaders with ulterior motives. Examination of the tax protest yielded no evidence that such was the case, i.e., the image of the tax protest leaders did not appear to be distorted by the newspapers.

Mass communication alone is probably insufficient without a network of communication specifically linking those interested in the matter, permitting leaders to emerge and draw up plans, and keeping the leaders and followers in touch through trusted spokesmen. If a movement is to grow rapidly it cannot rely upon its own network of communication, but must capitalize on networks already in existence. Advocates of humanitarian reforms, for example, try to involve key religious groups so that their communications can be carried through the already well-established denominational and interdenominational channels. Similar use is sometimes made of veterans' organizations, labor organizations, and chambers of commerce, all of which have a hierarchy through which communication can be rapidly disseminated to many individuals and reactions quickly assessed at the central agency. No such pre-existing network was located or made use of by the various local leaders in the tax protest, and it is altogether possible that none was available.

A consideration of the social organization of the metropolis suggests that the tax protest movement was foredoomed to failure so long as it remained a movement principally of suburban residential property owners, because the established lines of metropolitan communication

do not link suburb to suburb.[9] The relevant established communication networks link suburbs through agencies in the central city. Suburban chambers of commerce, for example, join forces through the downtown chamber rather than directly. The powerful taxpayers' organization in downtown Los Angeles, which had ready lines of communication to influential local groups throughout the metropolitan area, failed to give its support to the protest. Their action stemmed partly from distrust of the emerging leadership of the protest. But more significantly, the central city organization represents principally the interests of business and industrial property owners, rather than residential owners. Interests of the two groups regarding taxation for schools, the proper distribution of taxes between residential and business property, and the relative assessment of property in outlying and central areas were at odds. No other central city organization with lines of communication to the suburbs filled the gap so as to transform the movement from parallel protest in several suburbs to a metropolis-wide movement.

Thus one of the contributing factors in the failure of the tax protest movement appears to have been deficient communication. While the agencies of mass communication alerted the entire community, there was no central organization with a pre-established network of communication which could be quickly employed to link the suburban residential property owners who constituted the principal base for the movement. It is further hypothesized that no movement reflecting primarily the interests of suburban-dwellers could achieve sudden success because the pre-existing communication networks of the metropolis do not link suburbs directly, but only indirectly by way of the central city where financial, business and industrial interests are dominant.

Leadership. Second, there must emerge leadership which will be followed by individuals from a variety of local areas, and which is able to operate primarily on a community-wide basis rather than a local one. At the earlier stage small protest demonstrations may be led by figures with special local identities and perspectives, but some of these local leaders must effectively identify themselves with the more inclusive group, or already recognized community leaders must espouse the movement, or, as is most often the case, both must occur in combination.

The tax protest leadership seems to have been deficient in several respects. No evidence was presented in the newspapers that any of the spontaneous organizations combined their efforts.[10] However, a leader from one of these

local groups did emerge to be identified by the mass media as a community-wide leader. For reasons we could not ascertain fully, he refused to incorporate many local leaders into his group. His explanation was, "I wanted to keep my organization free of persons with political and selfish interests who would exploit the organization for their own purpose." We suggest that this kind of activity eliminated one of the most important means by which the various organizations could have been welded together. In addition, a number of recognized community leaders allowed themselves to be identified as "figure heads" with the movement. None, however, devoted himself to the movement in sustained enough fashion to be acceptable as the principal leader. As a result, a man inexperienced in such leadership, unwilling to make working compromises, and generally failing to transform his own popular image from that of a local agitator to a metropolitan statesman continued to direct the fortunes and to symbolize the character of the movement.

Program and Ideology. Third, an ideology and program suitable for rallying the bulk of protestors must be developed and widely disseminated through the communication channels already indicated. The ideology must effectively reflect the character of the prevailing protest sentiments and the program must afford a promising line of action which can command relatively unqualified support from a wide group of people.

The tax protest movement cannot be disposed of as one which did not develop a program since there was a concentration of attention, although late in the movement, on removing the tax assessor. However, because of the contemporary situation the program and ideology which were chosen probably could not in fact command wholehearted support from the contestants.

There are two lines along which the program could have developed: (1) the general reduction of taxes, or (2) the equalization of tax assessments. The first alternative conflicted with the increasing emphasis on the value of education following the launching of Sputnik I early in Octo-

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[9] This hypothesis was suggested by Dr. Ralph H. Turner.

[10] The following list represents some of the protest organizations mentioned but does not include all the groups involved in the protest:

November 9, 1957, the *Los Angeles Herald Express* reported that

a taxpayers' association was formed in Covina to study the tax problem.

November 13, 1957, the *Los Angeles Herald Express* reported an account of the creation of the East San Gabriel Valley Taxpayers' League.

November 21, 1957, the *Valley News and Green Sheet* reported that the city council had formed a twenty-member citizens' committee to study ways of cutting property taxes.

November 22, 1957, the *Los Angeles Mirror News* stated that the Covina Valley Board of Realtors was asking for the recall of the tax assessor.

December 1, 1957, the *Valley News and Green Sheet* reported that the West Valley Property Owners Protective Association, Incorporated was meeting to discuss the recalling of the tax assessor or limiting his powers.

December 5, 1957, the *Los Angeles Herald Express* announced the meeting of the Los Angeles City Council's Committee on Government Efficiency and Economy to discuss the tax structure.

ber, 1957. Many of the taxpayers affected were small property owners with children, living in recently developed suburban areas, and therefore were likely to identify with educational needs. Consequently, they were willing to accept the higher taxes to the extent to which they felt that the increase in taxes was due to the cost of education.[11] Further, the repeated opposition of established taxpayers' organizations to school budgets in preceding years had tended to discredit all general tax-reduction proposals in the eyes of the Parent-Teacher Associations and others interested in public schools. Consequently, any program to lower property taxes met with initial suspicion from a large share of the potential supporters of the movement under investigation.[12]

Equalization of taxes was the other direction in which the program could have developed. Many people felt that their higher tax bills were due to inequitable tax assessments. Conflicts were also involved in pursuing this alternative since it was not made convincingly clear to taxpayers that cases of inequitability were general enough to account for their high taxes. Although a few alleged cases of unjust assessments were cited, there was no systematic study made by any of the organizations which appeared to demonstrate that the higher tax bills were due to inequitable assessments.[13] Also, the question was never answered as to who would benefit and who would lose in the equalization process, since lowering some taxes presumably meant raising others. We interpret this to mean that people were reluctant to follow a protest program stressing equalization of taxes because they might be the ones who would have to pay higher taxes following a revision of tax assessments. Without convincing demonstration of malfeasance or incompetence in tax assessments, many people may have feared that the movement might lead to less rather than more equitable assessment. Consequently, as in the case of the first alternative, taxpayers could not be given promise of a clear-cut remedy to the situation.

As previously stated, the tax protest movement did have a program—the removal of the tax assessor from office.

However, several factors posed difficulties with this type of program. First, there was a substantially long period of time before the tax assessor was singled out. Next, the case against the assessor was not made convincingly clear. Although a few cases of inequitable assessments were recounted, there apparently was no further probe to determine malfeasance of office, such as hiring incompetent personnel, accepting money for a lower evaluation, etc. Furthermore, this program ran counter to one of tax reduction championed by established taxpayer associations. Consequently, the latter associations sought to redeem the tax assessor in the eyes of the public.

A further characteristic of any program which might contribute to failure is absence of both short and long range goals.[14] However, the tax protest could not be judged inadequate on this score since it had a range of goals. Short range goals were specific rallies and the necessary planning for succeeding rallies; an intermediate goal was recall of the tax assessor; and a long range goal was reorganization of the tax structure.

Public Image of the Movement. Fourth, the public image of a movement must be that of sustained and growing strength, promising tangible accomplishments in the near future as sufficient reward for the disruption of ordinary routines involved in supporting a protest movement. Unless the situation is one of desperation—nothing could be worse—the promise of fairly prompt successes is essential to sustained support on a mass basis.

The amount of attention given by the mass media to the tax protest gave an impression of considerable strength. But a single ill-conceived mass meeting served as the event which seriously damaged this impression. This meeting was held in the Los Angeles Coliseum, which has a seating capacity of approximately 100,000 persons. The organizer of the meeting stated in the *Los Angeles Times,* December 5, that "the swarm of letters they had received from sympathizers" was the reason they called a mass meeting in such a large structure. The mass meeting was to represent the culmination of efforts to arouse sufficient support for the recall of the tax assessor and subsequent revision of the tax structure. The program for the meeting was carefully planned to include leaders from various interested groups. A well-known TV news commentator was master of ceremonies. A popular TV and motion picture actor gave the keynote address, stating that he was present only as a protesting taxpayer. The list of speakers also included a State senator, the president of the State Board of Equalization, a County supervisor, the chief deputy tax collector, and a former mayor of West Covina. The public was made aware

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[11] This point was made in interviews by a well-known news commentator, a leader of one of the spontaneous tax protest groups, and an officer of a local taxpayers' organization. The latter also declared in the *Mirror News,* November 28, 1957, that "the taxpayers' wrath should be directed to school boards." The *Los Angeles Times* and the *Mirror News* of December 10, 1957 carried a statement by one of the county supervisors that the school boards as well as city councils and the board of supervisors were responsible for the high tax.

[12] The school board's position on the tax issue as reported in the *Los Angeles Times,* December 6, 1957, was that taxes should be reduced if "necessary and desirable" services were not reduced.

[13] On November 25, 1957 the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Mirror News* reported some of the charges of inequitable assessments made by a local leader to 8,000 persons the preceding night.

[14] A discussion of the importance of a variety of goals will be found in Thomas H. Greer, *American Social Reform Movements,* New York: Prentice-Hall, 1949, pp. 280-81.

of this meeting by telephone calls from organizational members, by handbills, and by the usual mass media.[15]

The impression of failure was created by the presence of a relatively small number of people in relation to the capacity of so large a stadium. The event was reported by all the leading newspapers which estimated attendance figures ranging from 6000 to 10,000 persons. In the Los Angeles Coliseum such a crowd appears negligible. It is not altogether clear that this small attendance indicated a lack of interest in the protest. The Coliseum is located far from the interested areas, so that persons had to travel a long way through heavy traffic to attend. (December 6th was a Friday.) In addition, we suspect that many were young persons who either had to leave their wives at home or hire baby sitters. Furthermore, although it did not rain as forecasted, the weather was cool.

By the standards usually applied to such rallies, the meeting was a success in terms of attendance. If the rally had, for example, been held in the nearby Shrine Auditorium with its seating capacity of approximately 6400 persons, the rally would have been regarded as a tremendous success. Therefore, the choice of the Coliseum as a meeting place must be considered an error in strategy.

We could find no evidence that any of the established community leaders mentioned above took any interest in the movement after the mass meeting. Apparently they felt that they could not gain in stature from further association with such a movement.

It is likely that prospects of success operated even more immediately on the established community leaders than on mass support. That is, the small number was discour-

aging to all at the meeting, but if the community leaders had continued to support the movement they might have influenced others in this direction. The fact that the community leaders felt they had nothing to gain also affected the leadership structure since there was no longer leadership which could command mass following.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing report we have examined a variety of factors which existing theory in social movements led us to believe should have something to do with the success or failure of a movement in reaching a stage of comprehensive organization. Our analysis has led us to conclude that any or all of four specific conditions could have accounted for failure in this instance. These conditions were the lack of a pre-existing network of communication linking those groups of citizens most likely to support the movement, the failure of the emergent leader to incorporate neighborhood and community leaders into his organization, the lack of a program to which a major section of the protestors could give wholehearted support, and a highly publicized conspicuous failure which weakened the public image. Confirmation of these suggested factors awaits research which circumvents the weaknesses contained in this exploratory study.

In the analysis of a single case there is no way to be sure of causal connections. Therefore, more studies of unsuccessful social movements are needed in order to compare them with successful ones so that the conditions essential for the success of social movements can be more rigorously specified. The special contribution of this study has been to supplement the usual reports on large-scale, highly successful movements with an examination of a smaller movement which was unsuccessful.

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[15] The meeting was announced in the *Los Angeles Times*, November 27 and December 1 and 5, 1957; the *Herald Express* on December 5 and 6, 1957; the *Valley News and Green Sheet* on December 5, 1957; and the *Mirror News* on December 6, 1957.

THE NUTTY OTHER: A PROLEGOMENA TO RESEARCH

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Very little sociological research has been devoted to the automobile accident despite the fact it often involves the relationship of individuals to each other. Many articles have been written about "safety" and a number of psychologically oriented studies have been undertaken.[1] The latter, beginning with the notion of "accident proneness" in industrial injuries, gives primary attention to physiological factors or to "personality."[2] As an alternative, this paper will explore the possibility that automobile accidents can be understood or analyzed within the framework of existing sociological theory.[3]

THE CONCEPT "ACCIDENT"

The concept "accident" itself requires some clarification. The traditional common-sense notion of an accident is that of something that is uncontrolled, if not "uncaused," and certainly "unintended." Even today, people tend to think of accidents as resulting from some "outside interference" in the course of events whereby the outcome is

beyond the reasonable control of the party involved. For instance, a farmer may intend simply to drive his car from home to a nearby town. But because he did not know his brakes were in poor condition, or because he incorrectly judged the speed of a car ahead, or both, he bumps into the rear of another car. Here the factors of defective brakes and a slow moving car ahead are somehow seen as outside interferences in the course of events. The outcome is called an "accident." The farmer feels he is not to blame and others regard the accident as "unavoidable."

This view of accidents has long made it impossible to study accidents in the same way we study other events, for the "unusual" is typically viewed as not being subject to scientific investigation. The problem, then, is to so conceive accidents that the interferences or unusual factors are amenable to causal explanation. One way to do this is to treat accidents within the framework of decision making behavior.

Accordingly, for the most general cause of accidents we propose the following: (1) the inability of the actor to make a correct decision in the situation, or to correct a faulty decision (i.e., act in such a way as to minimize the probability of injury), and (2) the inability of the actor to execute a correct decision once it has been made. Moreover, a person may enter a situation which has a high probability of producing injury but be unable to correct that decision: a person may decide to try to pass on a hill, and, perceiving an on-coming car, be unable to decide another course of action which could minimize the possibility of a collision.

This formulation places the driving of automobiles in decision-making terms. The automobile does not "go out of control," the driver *surrenders* control. It might turn out, upon examination, that mechanical failure which no one could be reasonably expected to predict is sometimes involved in creating situations which the driver is unable to handle properly. Usually, however, the automobile goes wherever it is aimed, or driven, as the case might be. Characteristic of most situations, alternative ways of behaving are present, and if they are perceived by the actor, a choice is made. The alternative way in behaving is known at least to the observer. For example, a person may or may not attempt to obey a stop sign, may or may not try to pass on a hill, may or may not respond to taunts by other

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[1] The National Safety Council publishes a journal, *Traffic Safety*, with a quarterly, *Research Review*. Many of these papers are "engineering" oriented. A number are psychological in character. They range from fairly mathematical developments of some equations, which could lead to systematic theory if properly augmented, to rather mundane papers. One paper reported testing "146 hypotheses," only a very few of which necessitated the rejection of the null one. Actually, of course, there was neither a real sense of problem nor a genuine commitment to a hypothesis. The National Safety Council also publishes a pamphlet called *Accident Facts*. A number of publishing agencies cooperate in submitting the required information. A cursory scanning of the data sheet for automobile-accident reports indicates a considerable bias regarding the place of alcohol and speed. A number of insurance companies publish articles in the interest of safety; but these are clearly propaganda and frequently involve a distortion of data to "drive home a point." Private agencies, too, are involved in publishing materials of varying worth.

[2] Apparently, the importance of "Motivational Research" has stimulated other attempts. *The Chicago Tribune* recently published a product of research called, "Automobiles—What They Mean to Americans," (undated, but released in 1957). This involves an attempt to assess symbols and their uses in automobiles. Had the symbols been subjected to careful social-psychological scrutiny, something possible would have emerged; instead, this was a common-sensical interpretation: Dodges appeal to a different "class" than do Fords, etc.

[3] The inquiry upon which this paper is based was begun by a grant made by the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota. Thanks must be given to the Mutual Service Insurance Company, who made certain files available to me, and to the Mayor's Traffic Advisory Committee (Minneapolis), of which I am a member, for their cooperation.

drivers. We intend to examine some of the sociological factors involved in the decisions which drivers have to make.

SPECIFIC PROBLEMATIC OBSERVATIONS

The following statements represent easily verified summarizations of numerical information about fatal automobile accidents.

A. There are major differences in the rural-urban fatal accident rates.
   1) The fatal accidents per hundred million miles driven in the rural area are practically twice that of urban areas.
   2) Most of the drivers in fatal accidents live within 25 miles of the accident. It is not a matter of urban drivers killing each other in the country, though some of that takes place of course.
   3) The urban accident pattern involves a relatively small fatal accident rate, but quite high rates of property damage and personal injury.

B. Men are more likely to be involved in an accident than are women; even taking into account relative miles driven, men are more likely to be involved in a fatal accident.

There are, of course, a number of other observations to which we could address ourselves. Space demands alone are sufficient to limit us to those we have chosen.

MAJOR THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS

To account for the above observations, we shall appeal to general sociological theory. In particular, we shall make use of the following fundamental ideas.

(a) Social interaction involves taking the role of the other with whom the interaction is to take place.

Skills at role-taking are not "either-or" characteristics; nor is it required that everyone be equally versatile in the taking of role. The bore at the party is neither invited to play that role, nor does he necessarily conceive of himself as taking that role. Moreover, the role which one takes may be more or less specific: It may be highly specific as in the case of a boxer concentrating on his opponent; or a bit general as the boxer appealing to the crowd (grandstanding). It may be quite general, as in the case of the politician interacting with "voters"; or it may be exceedingly general, as in the case of the statesman taking the role of humanity. Not too facetiously, we may suggest that the delinquent's "other" is the neighbor-*hood*, rather than the neighborhood.

(b) Role-taking involves the actor's knowing who the other is; sociologically, the 'other' may be regarded as the "other part of a relationship."

The different kinds of relationships one enters implies different kinds of "others" whose role the actor takes. The *personal relation*, for example, specifies not only a particular "other," but a *named* "other," whose identity is more or less completely known by the actor. Presumably, one's ability to take a role is maximized in the instance of the personal relation. The *structural relation*, to continue the example, involves a specific "other," but the essential thing is that the "other" is identified by title. The driver reacts differently when stopped by a close friend than he does when stopped by a police officer.

The *categorical relation*, involving members of an undifferentiated mass, renders role-taking more or less difficult. It is necessary, however, to observe three sub-types of categorical "others." For want of a better word, we can note the *impersonal*, but individual, "other." The bulk of the people one meets in city life consist of these unnamed people with whom a modicum of interaction takes place. The passersby we meet on the sidewalk present no real problem for the urban dweller. He makes no effort to "know" the "other," but because the "other" is culturally pretty much like himself, can take his role quite readily. In the case of the driver, also, since the "other" has similar patterns of behavior and utilizes a similar set of symbols, one can take his role with considerable ease. Moreover, certain additional—albeit stereotyped—knowledge lets one place the "other" in a more homogeneous category—the woman driver, the youngster in d.a. haircut and black leather jacket, and so on—and cues us in as to specific ways of taking the role.

The impersonal "other" is to be distinguished from the "stranger"; the stranger's name is also lacking, but his behavior is sufficiently different to make role-taking difficult. When I was in Massachusetts for the first time, I thought a driver was kindly signalling me on to pass him. It turned out that he was signalling a right turn. This is strange behavior. Had he driven on the "wrong side of the road," his behavior would have been "foreign." The trouble with the foreigner is that he is so different—his roles so contrary to one's own—that role-taking is difficult.

(c) Historically, the urban area involves a different network of relations than does the rural area.

The urban frame of reference is built largely around the structural and the categorical relations. In particular, the urban dweller lives among myriads of impersonal "others" who are so very like himself that he has no difficulty in taking role. In contrast, the typical rural frame of reference is built largely around the personal relation. Specifically, if the relation is not personal, it is most likely to involve a stranger. The rural person enters very few "impersonal" relations.

(d) Cultural definitions generate attitudes which in turn partly determine situations.

Each cultural form, insofar as it is juxtaposed against

some real or potential alternative, becomes justified by an explicit value premise. In the broadest sense, each traditional way of behavior develops an authority which justifies the behavior. Insofar as this 'authority' is internalized, it implies a way of action whenever the individual is in a situation for which the value is relevant. This "readiness to act" constitutes the individual's attitude, which can be acted out when the situation calls for the action and no impediment to behavior exists.

    (e) Customs and traditions as "proper ways of doing things" represent solutions to social problems and generate points of view.

In particular, a change in population density generates social problems in the sense that old customs no longer suffice for social control. That is to say, a customary way of behavior which adequately controlled the behavior of a few people in a situation may be insufficient when the population increases. In sparsely settled areas, for example, individual wells may be adequate for water supply and individual cesspools adequate for refuse. When the population of the area becomes sufficiently dense, the cesspools may result in a seepage problem which renders individual wells unfit as a source of water. The attitudes and expressed values which justify the individual water and sewer system are, then, likely to conflict with the values necessary to limit the individual and require his participation in a city sewage system and public water supply. We can say that the customary way of controlling sanitation was an inadequate solution to a contemporary problem and generated a conflict of values.

SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AS SOLUTIONS OF PROBLEMATIC OBSERVATIONS

We are now able to address ourselves directly to our problematic observations. The common sense suggestion to "drive like the other guy is nuts" suggests that the answer involves role theory. We will first account for the rural-urban differences in accident rates. Our argument appeals initially to the difference in basic relationships which exist in rural and urban areas. The rural resident, as we saw, traditionally engages in personal relations; and when he enters a categorical one he is most likely to relate to a stranger. There are few impersonal relations in the rural area. Contrarily, the urban resident has a large number of impersonal relations, and characteristically knows how take the role of the impersonal other.

When one enters his automobile, one gives up one set of identifications for another set. In particular, he gives up his name and announces himself through those symbols which socially adhere to his car. Certain of these symbols imply a considerable amount of stereotypical information —the hot-rod car suggests a particular kind of 'other' with

whom drivers will have to interact. In general, the relation between drivers is an impersonal one. Now, the urban driver is socialized in a matrix of impersonality. In a real sense, the automobile is indigenous to the urban scene. We ought not to be surprised, then, that the rural driver, lacking in the experience and hence the skills in taking the role of an impersonal other, is more likely to make those incorrect decisions which generate automobile accidents.

The increased density of population, and hence increased amount of automobile traffic, generates a problem in the urban area which does not exist in the rural one. Except for dramatic accident-producing instances, the likelihood of two automobiles contending for a given bit of road space does not frequently exist on the rural highway. That is to say, it is rare enough for any space to be occupied by a moving car in the country; it is much more rare (roughly the square of the first probability) for two cars to be vying for the same space. Hence, the problem of controlling traffic on the open road does not require the assumption that more than two cars will be entering an intersection at any one time. Accordingly, a definition of "right of way" may be developed using such notions as "the first car to enter the intersection."

The urban scene is almost the contradiction of the rural one. While the "traffic jam" during a rush hour scarcely needs comment, even less jammed moments reveal a high probability that at least one car will be passing by a certain point. The likelihood that two cars will try for the same space is surprisingly large: without any controls, the probability of two cars trying to cross the same intersection at the same time frequently approaches unity. This means that if the ordinary traffic decisions were left to the individual, no real vehicular movement would be possible. Imagine the "jams" if there were no controls and the individual could decide to turn left, turn right, go ahead, or stop as he chooses without reference to others.

The urban tendency has been towards the mechanization of traffic decisions. The task of urban traffic control is to maximize the number of vehicles passing a single point. The devices used are more similar to secondary controls than to personal controls. The semaphore, the stop-sign, and one-way traffic signs are all typically urban devices. Moreover, they require an attitude which justifies a limitation of the "individual's rights to decide for himself." The idea of "right of way" which makes sense in the rural area simply does not fit in the urban area.

To account for those accidents involving urban drivers in the rural areas, we may suggest that the mechanical device prevents the urban driver from learning how to make certain kinds of decisions. There is, then, a set of conflicting "forces." On the one hand, the impersonality of the urban area tends to prepare the urban driver to take the

role necessary to handle the automobile. On the other hand, the secondary controls may limit the urban driver's experience in making critical decisions. This latter possibility would certainly account for those accidents in which the urban driver gets involved at the beginning of his vacation: before he can adjust to the demand to take the role of the other driver, his reaction pattern is oriented towards relying upon a secondary device to make the required decision.

Our remaining problem is to account for the difference between male and female accident rates. We appeal, generally, to the competitive character of our culture, especially our male culture. Culturally, we are expected to compete in everything—in the amount of chrome on our cars (either the most or the least); in the amount of horsepower under the hood (either the most or the least); in the amount of miles per gallon of gasoline (either the most or the least). This is merely a reflection of our general competitive pattern. It is not surprising, then, to find that people will compete when they get into their cars. It is not surprising, either, to observe that many drivers get frustrated when any effort is made at limiting their rights to compete.

We need not, really, hold the "amount of driving" constant in comparing the male and the female: the increased amount of driving on the part of the male simply points up the difference between the male and female cultures. We may expect that as the female enters the highly competitive world of the male, she will share increasingly in the number of fatal accidents. As she behaves like the male, she should become the efficient killer he is.

CONCLUSION

We would suggest that the *small* number of fatalities constitutes a problem requiring some explanation. This flows from the characterizing of accidents as "rare events." The solution requires an appeal to "role-taking." The general cause of accidents was presumed to be an inability to make a correct decision in an accident-producing situation. These inabilities were differentially related to urban and rural residence.

The significance of differential residence seems to reside in differential skills at role-taking, especially when the "other" is neither personally nor structurally related to the actor. Moreover, the competitive nature of our cultural pattern suggests a competitive attitude on the part of at least the male segment of the automobile-driving public. We suspect that the female driver will become increasingly involved in fatal accidents as she invades the male social world. Certain control devices lend themselves to producing accidents insofar as they prevent a person from learning how to make correct automotive decisions.

It is quite clear that our formulation permits a discussion of the fatal automobile accident within the framework of sociological theory. This, of course, does not warrant the inference that sociological hypotheses have been verified. On the other hand, the spectacular ease with which this has been accomplished gives substantial weight to the general sociological argument of role-taking.
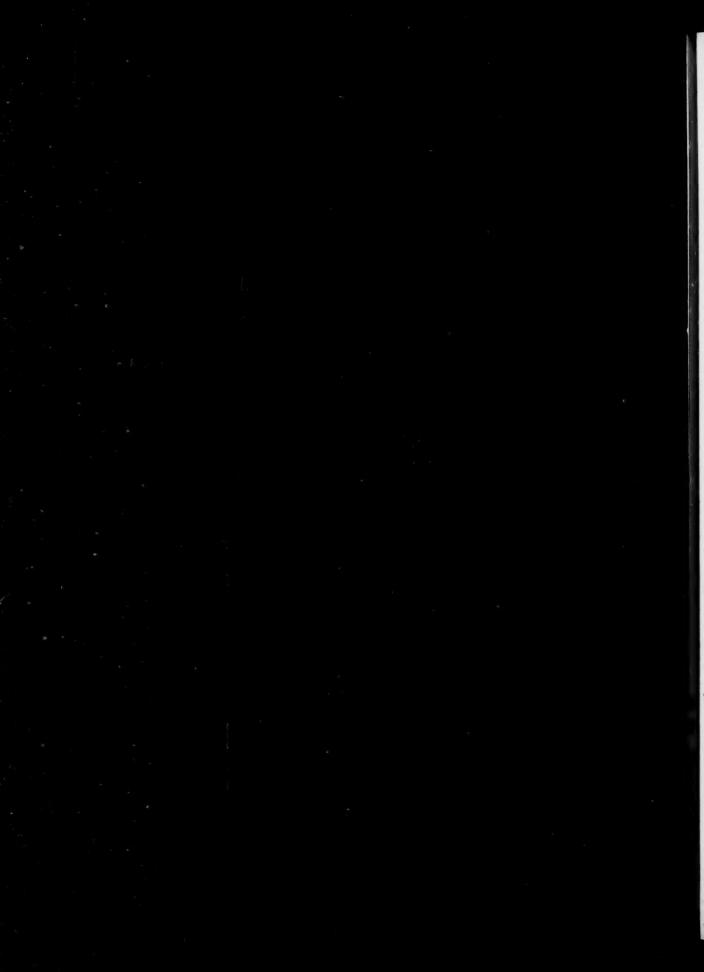
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